

# MONSTROUS SOUNDSCAPES

## LISTENING TO THE VOICE OF THE MONSTER IN GREEK EPIC, LYRIC, AND TRAGEDY

Thesis submitted for admission to the degree of DPhil

by Hannah Silverblank

Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford

Supervised by Dr Felix Budelmann and Professor Fiona Macintosh

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## ABSTRACT

Although mythological monsters have rarely been examined in any collective and comprehensive manner, they constitute an important cosmic presence in archaic and classical Greek poetry. This thesis brings together insights from the scholarly areas of ‘monster studies’ and the ‘sensory turn’ in order to offer readings of the sounds made by monsters. I argue that the figure of the monster in Greek poetry, although it has positive attributes, does not have a fixed definition or position within the cosmos. Instead of using definitions of monstrosity to think about the role and status of Greek monsters, this thesis demonstrates that by listening to the sounds of the monster’s voice, it is possible to chart its position in the cosmos. Monsters with incomprehensible, cacophonous, or dangerous voices pose greater threats to cosmic order; those whose voices are semiotic and anthropomorphic typically pose less serious threats.

The thesis explores the shifting depictions of monsters according to genre and author. In Chapter 1, ‘Hesiod’s *Theogony*: The Role of Monstrosity in the Cosmos’, I consider Hesiod’s genealogies of monsters that circulate and threaten in the nonhuman realm, while the universe is still undergoing processes of organisation. Chapter 2, ‘Homer’s *Odyssey*: Mingling with Monsters’, discusses the monster whom Odysseus encounters and even imitates in order to survive his exchanges with them. In Chapter 3, ‘Monsters in Greek Lyric Poetry: Voices of Defeat’, I examine Stesichorus’ *Geryoneis* and the presence of Centaurs, Typhon, and Gorgons in Pindar’s *Pythian* 1, 2, 3, and 12. In lyric, we find that these monsters are typically presented in terms of the monster’s experience of defeat at the hands of a hero or a god. This discussion is followed by two chapters that explore the presence of the monster in Greek tragedy, entitled ‘Centripetal Monsters in Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound* and *Oresteia*’ and ‘Centrifugal Monsters in Greek Tragedy: Euripides and Sophocles.’ Here, I argue that in tragedy the monster, or the abstractly ‘monstrous’, is located within the figure of the human being and within the *polis*. The coda, ‘Monstrous Mimesis and the Power of Sound’, considers not only monstrous voices, but monstrous music, examining the mythology surrounding the *aulos* and looking at the sonic developments generated by the New Musicians.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TEXTS USED

- LfrgE** B. Snell and H. Erbse, eds., *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*. Göttingen. (1955-).
- LIMC** *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. Zurich. (1981-99).
- LSJ** Liddell, H.G., R. Scott, H. Stuart Jones, R. McKenzie, and P.G.W. Glare. *Greek-English Lexicon, with a Revised Supplement*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford. (1996).
- M-W** R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, eds., *Fragmenta Hesiodica*. Oxford. (1967).
- PMG** D. Page, ed., *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford. (1962).
- PMGF** M. Davies, ed., *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Oxford. (1991).
- S-M** B. Snell and H. Maehler, eds., *Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis*. Leipzig. (1987-89).
- Sch.** Scholia (on).
- TrGF** B. Snell, R. Kannicht, and S. L. Radt, eds., *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Göttingen 1971–2004).

Ancient texts are quoted from the most recent Oxford Classical Texts, except the following:

*Le Pitiche*. Ed. B. Gentili et al. Rome and Milan. (1995).

*Stesichorus: The Poems*. Ed. M. Davies and J. Finglass. Cambridge. (2015).

Journal abbreviations follow those in *L'Année Philologique*.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Monsters are diverse and multifaceted beings that pose a range of intellectual questions. As a result, this thesis is greatly indebted to a great number of people who helped me tackle these questions from a variety of perspectives. I am immensely grateful to my supervisors, Prof. Fiona Macintosh and Dr Felix Budelmann. I will always cherish the memories of our hours spent discussing monsters, hours which passed so quickly and delightfully. Prof. Macintosh has been a profound mentor for my scholarly and human development for the past several years; and Dr Budelmann's incredible generosity, good humour, and detailed attention to my work must not be underestimated. Several others have also made important contributions to this project, including Professors Brooke Holmes, Patrick Finglass and Richard Rutherford, as well as Dr Rebecca Armstrong. Gratitude also extends to the wonderful mentors with whom I have had the pleasure of studying over the years, including Deborah Roberts, Bret Mulligan, and Joshua Billings.

I must also thank the Clarendon Fund, which made this research possible, along with the Susan Buckee Scholarship and the Warr-Goodman Scholarship from Lady Margaret Hall, and Princeton University for its generous support of my Research Consultancy in Autumn 2015. This thesis was greatly improved by the comments of a number of panels, seminars, and conferences over the past few years, including the Bryn Mawr Classics Colloquium of 2016, the 2016 ACLA annual meeting, the 2016 Music Faculty Research Colloquium Series at Oxford, the 'Mirabile Dictu' conference at NYU, the Postclassicisms network, the 'Sacred Animals, Monsters, and Demons' conference at St Andrews, the 2015 CA annual meeting, the 'Myth and the Senses' research network at Oxford, and the 'Decreations' Symposium at Princeton. I am also grateful to the librarians at the University of Oxford, Princeton University, and Haverford College, and also to the APGRD. Special thanks also go to my wonderful family for their love and support; and to Chloë in particular, for making vivid in my ears the belches of Typhon, the blood-curdling shrieks of Scylla, and the belly laughs all her own. I am grateful to Katie, Melissa, Rachel, Bridget, Kelly, and Madeleine for the gift of their friendship; to the Pancoe and Tobias families for their limitless support; and to Rocky, Ruby, and Marley for their nonhuman companionship through it all. Finally, I thank Rowan for making each day sparkle, even when crowded with monsters.

## INTRODUCTION

### THEORISING THE MONSTER THROUGH SOUND

The connection between mythological monsters and sound is not always immediately obvious to classicists. Separately, both monstrosity and sound are recognised as important and productive areas of study, but the combination of the two has been largely neglected in the field of Classics. In this thesis, I argue for both the utility and the necessity of considering Greek monsters in the context of the sounds they make. Through sound and voice, Greek monsters pose questions and threats in ways that are culturally specific and different from those in other mythological traditions. In other words, sound is a central part of what constitutes the Greek mythological monster.

The goal of this thesis is to rethink the ontological category of the monster in Greek literature using a vocal dimension. Among the monster figures that most directly illustrate the importance of the link between monstrosity and sound are the Sirens, whose voices are (in our record) heard for the first time in Book 12 of Homer's *Odyssey*. Known in archaic and classical Greek literature for the deadly beauty of their song, the Sirens reveal that Greek monsters can exert danger not solely through their bodies, but also through their voices. The myth of the Sirens indicates that voice can function as a weapon that constitutes a monster's mode of threat.

The Sirens, however, are not the only monsters in the Greek mythological tradition with dangerous or powerful voices. The Gorgon is often considered exclusively within the realm of the visual, since she threatens petrification through acts of gazing;<sup>1</sup> but she maintains a foundational

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<sup>1</sup> See *Il.* 11.36-37 for the description of the Gorgon on Agamemnon's armour, Γοργῶ βλοσυρῶπις...| δεινὸν δερκομένη. For secondary literature that emphasises the visual element of the Medusa myth, see Baumbach (2011), Padel (1992) 61, Phinney Jr. (1971), and Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 190. On the centrality of sound in Pindar's version of the myth, see Steiner (2013) and Segal (1998) 85–104 and Segal (1995). See Lowe (2010) 186 on the link between the Gorgon gaze and Orphic song.

link with the guttural growl through the etymology of her name.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, we learn from Pindar *Pythian* 12.6-27 that the strange, foreign sound of the *aulos* is Athena's invention, created in sonic imitation of Medusa's sisters. More specifically, Pindar notes that Athena hears the sound of the Gorgon sisters singing a lament for their dead sister Medusa and translates that sound into the sonic potential of the *aulos* (*Pyth.* 12.21).

According to this mythic tradition, then, the sound of the monstrous voice lies at the heart of all auletic performance. Pindar's depiction of the simultaneous eeriness and social power of the *aulos*' sound in *Pythian* 12.22-27<sup>3</sup> reveals that the Sirens are not the sole Greek monsters whose voices are associated with danger and pleasure.<sup>4</sup> Aeschylus' Erinyes function as a third set of female monsters with dangerous voices. This chorus of primordial deities threatens Orestes with the violence of their lyreless binding song: when the Erinyes threaten to bind and wither him with the force of their voices (*Eum.* 328-398), they engage with the notion that sound has a distinct kind of power over the physical state of its listener. As with the Sirens, the monstrous voice can be a weapon used against the bodies (and minds) of human beings.

The female, collectivised monsters of the Greek mythological tradition are not the only monsters whose strange and marvellous sounds contribute to our understanding of their mode of monstrosity. Typhon is described twice as a marvel to hear, in Hesiod and Pindar (*Theog.* 834; *Pythian* 1.50), and is therefore the sole example of a sonic marvel in the poetry from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the

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<sup>2</sup> See Howe (1954) and Segal (1998) 86 for the noise that lies at the heart of the etymology for Gorgon, and the latter for a discussion of the visual representations of the Gorgon's voice. See also Murgatroyd (2007) 2. See Wilk (2000) for a detailed study of the Gorgon. For a discussion of the visual receptions of the Medusa myth in Apollodorus and Ovid, see Albrecht (2009) 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> The eeriness comes from the sound of the monster's voice; the power comes from its reminder of contests mentioned at *Pyth.* 12.22-27.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 3, 155-160 for a close reading of Pindar's *Pythian* 12.

5<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>5</sup> His soundscape is markedly dissonant, combining voices divine, serpentine, canine, leonine and bovine (*Theog.* 829-835). Typhon furthermore poses the greatest challenge to the Olympian order of the cosmos when he threatens to usurp kingship from Zeus, immediately after the god's success in the Titanomachy. As a result, Typhon's accompanying confusing and hybrid vocality both reflects and enforces the cosmic danger he poses.

On the opposite end of the sonic spectrum, Stesichorus presents a humanoid-sounding incarnation of the monster Geryon in his fragmentary lyric poem the *Geryoneis*. Geryon's voice expresses sentiments that are markedly heroic, and his voice is in no way characterised as monstrous, dangerous, or frightful. His voice is striking for its humanity, which in turn informs our reading of the complex relationship between this monster and his opponent, Heracles. In addition to these feminine and masculine monsters, the more emphatically bestial monsters of Greek mythology also take on a range of vocal characteristics. We also hear of Cerberus' fifty-headed brazen-voiced barking in Hesiod's *Theogony* (*Theog.* 310-312); Scylla's puppy-like yelping in Homer's *Odyssey* (12.85-88); and the Euripidean sea bull's bellows, mingled in with the crashing sound of waves, in the messenger speech of Euripides' *Hippolytus* (1201-1217). In all of these instances, the voices of monsters function as overwhelming sonic manifestations of the monster's own threat.

From this brief overview of a selection of the sonic monsters that resound throughout archaic and classical Greek poetry, it becomes clear that monsters can emit a wonderfully wide range of vocalisations. This assortment of voices opens up a number of questions about monstrous sound as a category. Is it possible to generalise about monstrous sound and voice as acoustic

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<sup>5</sup> A comparable example is found in Euripides' *Children of Heracles*, where the rejuvenation of Iolaus (and the coming true of his prayers) is introduced as a story that is marvellous to hear, κλύειν δὴ θαύματος πάρεστί σοι (*Heracl.* 853). This is not characterised as a sonic marvel, but rather a marvellous tale.

classifications that operate across a range of mythological monsters? Or must the voice of each monster be considered individually, without attempts at patterning or generalisation? Do monsters vocalise in ways distinct from gods, animals, and mortals; and if so, how? How does the voice contribute to, or complicate, portrayals of monsters and monstrosities in the Greek mythological imagination? And how can we consider the category of the monster itself in a manner that is both productive and culturally specific to the texts at hand?

In this Introduction and throughout this thesis, I propose answers to these questions. I argue that monsters do not all sound the same and that there is no specific aesthetic commonality between monsters' voices in Greek poetry. Certain kinds of vocalisations are, unsurprisingly, particularly common among monsters. Barking and roaring, for instance, show up with relative frequency; many monsters also speak (Greek) human language, and Typhon sometimes speaks in divine language.<sup>6</sup> The types of sounds that monsters make overlap with those that come from the mouths of animals, humans, and gods; and as such, these vocalisations are not uniquely monstrous in quality. Just as monstrous bodies in Greek poetry often take their form from exaggerations or hybridisations of the physical qualities associated with existing beings, so too do their voices resound in tones animal, divine, and human. There are not specific terms for sounds or noises that belong solely to monsters.

Instead, what sets monstrous sound apart from the noises made by other beings is its *effect*.<sup>7</sup> This effect is precisely what distinguishes the monster from other categories of being. The key element that makes the monster monstrous, specifically in the Greek mythological context, is that

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<sup>6</sup> Barking sounds are attributed to Typhon at Hes. *Theog.* 834; Cerberus at Hes. *Theog.* 310-312; Scylla at Hom. *Od.* 12.85-88. Roars (or other leonine noises) and bellows come from Typhon at Hes. *Theog.* 832-833. Echoing bellows come from the sea-bull in Eur. *Hipp.* 1201-1202 and 1215.

<sup>7</sup> Mittman (2012) 6. For references to other overlapping arguments made in the various essays in Mittman and Dendle (2012), see Mittman (2012) 6 n. 14.

the monster's presence and behaviour has a particular destabilising effect on the world in which it circulates. The monster calls into question some of the organising principles of the universe (as manifest in whatever textual world in which the monster appears); concrete monsters bring about this effect, and beings which can be deemed 'monstrous' are those which inflict category destabilisation upon other beings. This thesis argues that the monster – and by extension, the 'monstrous' – is something that calls into question the legitimacy of categories. When I use the term 'monstrosity', I typically refer to the manifestation of a monster's effects, in their category-destabilising capacity. I do not posit a strict definition of the monster based on features or characteristics; instead, I argue instead that the monster is a category disruptor to those who encounter it.

Monsters can themselves be divine or semi-divine beings with hybrid, powerful, abnormal, dangerous, excessive, superfluous forms, and they can use these bodies with supernatural capability, strength, or malevolence: but defining monsters through their forms does not result in meaningful or consistent categorisation, as I will demonstrate in this thesis. We will discover, in the following chapters, that the most meaningful way to understand a monster's place in the cosmos is to listen to its voice. Its vocal qualities very often reflect its fundamental nature and its position within the organisation of the universe, and as such, the voice can do something more significant for our understanding of monsters than can a definition for the word 'monster.'

The monster does not only represent the destabilising of categories through its own hybridity or otherness, as represented in hybrid or deviant physiognomy – though it does this, too. More significantly, the monster instigates an encounter between itself and its opponent, and this encounter in turn forces a relation between the monster itself and either a god or a human. This process of relation, whereby humans and gods are forced to relate to monsters – whether through

violence, antagonism, cooperation, or dialogue – very often has the effect of calling into question the taxonomy of those very beings. When facing monsters, the human characters covered in this thesis often temporarily become something other than themselves. Throughout the following chapters, we see these human characters take on the characteristics of beasts, animals, and even monsters too, albeit in varying ways.

When I refer to ‘monstrous sound’ in this thesis, therefore, I do not refer to sonic quality in terms of pitch, register, or tone. Instead, I refer to sounds which themselves enact this category-destabilising process that is intrinsic to the monster’s cosmic role. The ‘monstrous’ itself, as an adjectival descriptor belonging both to monsters and to other beings by metaphorical extension, is that which destabilises the ontologies of that with which it comes into contact. We might therefore understand ‘monstrous sound’ in terms of its impact rather than in terms of its acoustic qualities. So although the actual sounds issued by monsters overlap with the sounds made by gods, animals, and humans, what sets them apart is the way they make an impact on the listener and the way in which they, like the monster itself, challenge established categories of being.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to exploring the qualities of monstrous sound itself, I also examine the ways in which literary texts allow their audiences and readers to hear (or prevent them from hearing) monstrous sounds. In the poetic depictions of the monsters already mentioned, their sounds are represented through a wide range of narratorial methods. These include direct quotation (e.g. Stesichorus’ Geryon); indirect quotation (e.g. Odysseus’ quotation of Polyphemus’ monologue and the Sirens’ song in Homer’s *Odyssey*); messenger speech (e.g. sea-bull in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*); musical and rhythmic accompaniment (e.g. the dancing and stomping feet of the Aeschylean Erinyes); descriptions of sounds (e.g. Hesiod’s Typhon); descriptions of the impacts

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<sup>8</sup> Beal (2002) 7; Carroll (1990) 34; Leone (2004) x-xi; Mittman (2012) 7-8; Murgatroyd (2007) 22-33.

of sounds on the human hearer (e.g. Homer's Sirens, Aeschylus' Erinyes, Hesiod's and Pindar's Typhon). Despite this range of methods, the delivery of monstrous sound always occurs in a highly controlled soundscape that avoids mimesis of senseless sounds.<sup>9</sup> As Martin West notes of Greek music generally:

One can do other things melodically with the voice besides singing. One can hum, yodel, imitate bird or animal cries, or croon wordlessly. The Greeks, however, did not exploit these possibilities for musical purposes. Nor did they have songs composed partly or wholly of nonsense syllables, as some peoples do. On the contrary, their songs (so far as our knowledge goes) were settings of thoroughly articulate, often highly sophisticated poetic texts, with little verbal repetition.<sup>10</sup>

Thus the poetry examined here presents a stylised mediation of the monstrous voice. Throughout the following chapters, I demonstrate that the methods by which texts make available, or unavailable, the sounds of monsters have a direct relationship with the mode of threat that the monster poses.

Although this thesis engages with monsters and sound broadly, the scope of the project gives particular attention to the noise-making monsters in Greek poetry. As a result, I give less developed readings of the monsters whose treatment is primarily visual, or whose sonic element is insignificant in their literary characterisation. Indeed, there are monsters whose sound or silence receives no attention in the texts examined in this thesis, including monsters such as Phorcys, Ceto, Echidna, Chimaera, and the Nemean Lion. Although these monsters feature in the thesis when they are thematically relevant, non-vocal monsters are not the central subject of study here.

Instead, I focus specifically on the noise-making monsters in Homer, Hesiod, Stesichorus, Pindar, the tragedians, and the New Musicians. The fact that not all mythological monsters emit significant soundscapes does not suggest that sound should not be understood as a central theme

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<sup>9</sup> The exceptions are the Erinyes in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the genre of satyr play, and much of the New Music. See Coda for further discussion.

<sup>10</sup> West (1992) 39.

or characteristic of Greek monsters. On the contrary, all monsters that receive extensive literary treatment in the extant poetry do in fact generate sounds. The poets do not always mention the sounds of monsters when monsters are referred to briefly or without major significance for the texts at hand.<sup>11</sup> But all the monsters that generate existential questions within the poetry of this era are regularly sonic. This indicates that sound is a central interface for more developed explorations of problems posed by monsters.

### Sound and Ontology

Although it is not precisely contemporary with the literary material addressed in this dissertation, Aristotle's *De Anima* posits a theory of sound and voice that illuminates the connections between the sonic realm and ontology. Aristotle attributes voice, φωνή, exclusively to entities bearing souls, and takes voice as a manifestation of the soul's agency (*De an.* 420b6-15).

According to Aristotle, voice, φωνή, belongs to creatures endowed with ψυχή of some kind, or that are in themselves ἔμψυχος.<sup>12</sup> Noise, ψόφος, is generated by inanimate objects as a result of physical forces in motion, and also by bloodless animals and fish. Ψόφος also comes from ἔμψυχος animals when the sound is devoid of intentionality or agency. Φωνή is intentional; ψόφος is accidental. So we might refine some of our claims here to specify that the quality of a monster's soundscape – whether it is described with voice specifically or with noise – reveals something about

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<sup>11</sup> Most of the monsters that Hesiod mentions briefly in the *Theogony* are not characterised in terms of sound. This is the case for the Hydra, Echidna, Ceto, Phorcys, Geryon, Orthos, the Erinyes, the Chimaera, the Gigantes, the Harpies, the Sphinx, the Nemean Lion, the Gorgons, and the Graiae. Yet the voices of many of these monsters (Geryon, the Erinyes, Gorgons) are explored deeply in other poems, so it is highly possible that the non-vocal monsters in Hesiod are given extensive vocalisations in lost poems. Aeschylus' *Phorcydes*, for example, featured a chorus of Graiae and took Perseus' encounter with the Medusa as a central theme. Aeschylus' *Sphinx* was the satyr play of his Oedipus trilogy, and staged the encounter between Oedipus and the Sphinx.

<sup>12</sup> For sound terminology here and elsewhere in Greek literature, see Barker (2002). For breakdowns in the taxonomy posited by Aristotle, see *ibid.*, 28; for discussion of sounds that are not voices in Aristotle, see Connor (2014) 33-34.

its positioning in the cosmos. The taxonomy of its sound can clarify the monster's potential for anthropomorphic subjectivity and agency.

Aristotle describes voice as a force that expresses a meaningful (σημαντικός) idea from the soul (*De an.* 420b, 27-421a2). So when a monster possesses a voice, it possesses both a soul and a capacity for thought – or, in other words, subjectivity. It is clear in the cases of several monsters, therefore, that their voice reveals an interiority, because they use it to express wishes, hopes, or speculation. Indeed, as Stephen Connor writes, there is ‘no voice that does not have somebody... in it.’<sup>13</sup> This is the case with Homer's Polyphemus, whose monologue to his favourite ram expresses a will toward camaraderie with the animal as well as rage toward Odysseus.<sup>14</sup> This is also the case with Stesichorus' Geryon, whose voice expresses his uncertainty and speculation about his own mortality, as well as his considered decision to defend his honour against Heracles.<sup>15</sup>

This application of Aristotle's sound theory to mythological monsters is of course an artificial one. This is because the monsters covered in this thesis are not of the same ilk as those that Aristotle describes in *Generation of Animals*.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, Aristotle argues against the biological veracity of monsters and claims that hybrid creatures as such are not physically possible. An animal whose body resembles a goat and whose head resembles a monkey is really just *one* species, he writes, with the deformed part merely resembling that of the other species. The discrepancy within gestation periods across species proves this claim (*Gen. an.* 4.769b26-28). Hybrid beings therefore are not existentially hybrid, but rather phenotypically hybrid; they display deformities with coincidental resemblances to other species.<sup>17</sup> Monstrosity, Aristotle tells us, falls under the category of deformity, and should

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> See discussion of the voice of Polyphemus in Chapter 2, 83-95.

<sup>15</sup> See discussion of Geryon's voice in Chapter 3, 126-149.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Williams (2011) 11.

<sup>17</sup> See Upton (2003).

therefore be understood as a natural phenomenon rather than a mythological one (*Gen. an.* 769b29-31).

Aristotle's understanding of *terata* is therefore emphatically biological.<sup>18</sup> However, since this study deals with the imaginative world of monsters and sound, I find it useful to borrow a near-contemporary understanding of sonic operation and source, and to apply it to the realm of literary monsters. Aristotle mentions four particular manifestations of monstrosity: 1. Excess or lack of parts<sup>19</sup>; 2. An appearance contrary to nature's norms<sup>20</sup>; 3. Hybridity<sup>21</sup>; 4. Significant difference from the parents.<sup>22</sup> Here, Aristotle characterises the different incarnations of monstrosity as deviations from physical symmetry, proportion, and other kinds of normative embodiment. Aristotle's list of features furthermore demonstrates that our nearest-contemporary explication of ancient Greek monstrosity includes positive features and characteristics rather than merely gaining identity by negation or combination of features belonging to other beings. Aristotle's listed characteristics of monstrosity are therefore not contemporary with the material covered in this thesis, but still offer the nearest-contemporary ancient example of 'monster theory.' The discussion of *terata* in *Generation of Animals* indicates at the very least that there is some cultural understanding of *terata* as a group.

### Scholarly Context

For the past twenty years, studies of monsters have owed a significant debt to the medievalist and English literary scholar Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. His edited volume *Monster Theory: Reading*

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<sup>18</sup> On Aristotle's definition of deformity, see Witt (2012).

<sup>19</sup> *Gen. an.* IV.770b-772a.

<sup>20</sup> *Gen. an.* IV.770b-772b.

<sup>21</sup> *Gen. an.* IV.749a.

<sup>22</sup> *Gen. an.* IV.770b.

*Culture* has become a canonical reference for scholars working on monsters.<sup>23</sup> Cohen's seven theses of monstrosity are still resonant for thinking about Greek monsters, but Cohen's reading practice does not wholly accommodate the mode of monstrosity that we find in Greek poetry.

Cohen's 'Seven Theses' on monsters are as follows:

- (I) 'The Monster's Body is a Cultural Body',<sup>24</sup>
- (II) 'The Monster Always Escapes',<sup>25</sup>
- (III) 'The Monster is the Harbinger of Category Crisis',<sup>26</sup>
- (IV) 'The Monster Dwells at the Gates of Difference',<sup>27</sup>
- (V) 'The Monster Polices the Borders of the Possible',<sup>28</sup>
- (VI) 'Fear of the Monster Is Really a Kind of Desire',<sup>29</sup>
- (VII) 'The Monster Stands at the Threshold... of Becoming.'<sup>30</sup>

Without Cohen's 'theses', a study such as this would be impossible. Twenty years later, however, these theses require some updates and additions. Indeed, it is useful for monster studies as a field of enquiry to have central tenets in order to organise thoughts surrounding a concept of the figure of the monster as a universal category (while of course noting that monsters defy categorisation); yet Cohen's articulation of the theoretical monster is not fully compatible with the observations made about the Greek mythological monster in this study.

Cohen writes, 'A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read.'<sup>31</sup> This is not true in the case of Greek monsters. I argue for a new mode of interaction with the Greek mythological monster that goes beyond 'reading', and instead includes *listening*.<sup>32</sup> The Greek

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<sup>23</sup> Several of Cohen's other articles and books are also of interest to monster studies, such as Cohen (1999), (2000a), (2006), and (2014).

<sup>24</sup> Cohen (1996) 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-6.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-12.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-16.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-20.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>32</sup> See Gurd (2016) 17-22.

monster is not only ‘a glyph that seeks a hierophant’,<sup>33</sup> but a voice that seeks a listener. Cohen writes that the monster is not a figure that is good to think with, but rather that ‘the monster can be read only *through* – for the monster, pure culture, is nothing of itself.’<sup>34</sup> The voice of the monster as sounded in Greek poetry suggests that the monster *is* something of itself, insofar as it has subjectivity and an impulse towards expression. Furthermore, I argue that the monster possesses a positive identity, in that it regularly destabilises the identities of those who encounter it. Cohen’s theses therefore miss a key element of Greek monstrosity – perhaps demonstrating that monsters ought not to be theorised wholesale across cultural and literary divisions, particularly now that the field has had a few decades to develop.<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, the centrality of voice and sound to so many Greek monsters can be seen as one of the features that distinguishes the Greek monster from the monsters of other cosmic and mythological traditions. This is not to say that all Greek monsters must be eminently vocal: as I have already noted, we do find monsters whose voice or sounds are irrelevant to their literary depiction. Instead, I am arguing that Greek poetry, in its presentation of monsters, regularly puts sound at the heart of its depiction of monstrosity. The potential of the voice to explore questions of monsters’ subjectivity, ontological status, and power is evidenced in the work of many Greek authors.

Monsters in Greek and Roman literary material have received less concentrated scholarly attention than monsters from other periods and textual traditions. The relative inattention to Greek mythological monsters may be surprising, in view of the energetic activity in monster studies in

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. Cf. Williams (2011) 11-12.

<sup>34</sup> Cohen (1996) 21 n. 6.

<sup>35</sup> See Murgatroyd (2007) 1. See also Atherton (1998) x on the ways in which monsters are defined in relation to the specificities of the culture that generates them. Cf. Cohen (1996) 3, who makes a case for his universal theorisation of monsters.

other humanities disciplines for the past two decades. It may also be surprising due to the ubiquity of nonhuman figures across literary genres in Greek poetry and their vivid reception histories in other cultural traditions. The small number of volumes explicitly devoted to the figure of the monster or clusters of monsters does not mean, however, that monsters have not gripped the imaginations of classicists.

Indeed, perhaps it is because Greek monsters are not always clearly delineated from other nonhuman forces that they have not yet been studied as a collective group – and this blurry distinction between monsters and other nonhuman figures in Greek mythology is a regular question for this thesis. This ambiguity is one aspect that makes studies of monsters particularly productive for Greek mythology: monsters function as an interface where all cosmic categories are contested. Because there are not many volumes on Greek monsters as such, this thesis takes significant cues from works that implicitly participate in monster studies. Many of these works deal with related themes, including ‘the nonhuman’ generally,<sup>36</sup> the gods,<sup>37</sup> gender,<sup>38</sup> the abject,<sup>39</sup> animals<sup>40</sup>, individual myths, and elemental forces.<sup>41</sup>

Classics as a discipline has begun to explore monsters as a category more recently.<sup>42</sup> Dunstan Lowe published a book in 2015 entitled *Monsters and Monstrosity in Augustan Poetry*. Lowe’s is the first full-length comparative study of Roman monsters during this literary period, and he organises his analyses into useful binaries. These include mythological vs. ‘real’ monsters and feminine vs. masculine monsters, whom he treats as representations of specific modes of

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<sup>36</sup> Grusin (2015); Johnston (1999); Padel (1992).

<sup>37</sup> Johnston (2007); Kearns (2004); Mikalson (1986); Padel (1995); Park (2014).

<sup>38</sup> Carson (1995); Cohen (1995); Haraway (1991); Holmes (2012); Huet (1993); Loraux (1995); Miller (2013); Stratton (2007); Winkler (1990).

<sup>39</sup> Kristeva (1982).

<sup>40</sup> Derrida (2002); Haraway (2003); Payne (2010); Perkell (1993).

<sup>41</sup> Cohen (2014); Payne (2014).

<sup>42</sup> For a cultural history of the transmission of monsters in the ancient world, see Wengrow (2014).

misogyny and anxieties about bestiality within the human. Lowe explores how Augustan poets metamorphose the monsters they receive from the Greek mythological tradition, such that they signify in new and specifically Roman ways. Lowe's book argues for the centrality of the monster in the process of Roman self-definition, artistic innovation, and literature.

Lowe's book offers an important insight into monster studies dealing with ancient Greek and Roman material. He helpfully separates the study of classical monstrosity from studies dealing with, for example, Gothic literature or science fiction:

For the Romans (as for the Greeks, from whom nearly all hybrid or unreal beings derived), there was no term or conceptual category grouping six-fingered men or human-headed livestock together with Sirens, Cyclopes, and other fantastical mythological beings. What we call bodily abnormality or misshapeness does not seem to have been recognized collectively, but instead handled piecemeal and from varying perspectives.<sup>43</sup>

Lowe's observation may offer some insight into why monster studies have not proliferated in abundance within the discipline of Classics. Since Greeks and Romans thematise monstrosity differently, and on a more individualised scale, than later traditions do, comprehensive study of the monster as a category poses serious challenges for the scholar who wishes to understand the monster holistically in the ancient Greek or Roman imagination.

This is a problem as well as a challenge taken up in this Introduction, and throughout this thesis. Monsters do in fact roam through a range of genres, and fulfil a number of different roles. And while Lowe is correct in pointing out that Greek poetry never explicitly defines the monster as a figure, there are certain narratorial groupings in Greek poetry that suggest a vague acknowledgment of their commonalities. These include the offspring of Phorcys and Ceto as grouped together in Hesiod's *Theogony*, Odysseus' monstrous encounters in Books 9-12 of

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<sup>43</sup> Lowe (2015) 8.

Homer's *Odyssey*, and Aristotle's discussion of the 'bodily abnormality' localised in the figure of the *teras*.

Whilst Lowe's book is an important point of reference for this thesis, there are other fundamental areas where our critical approaches to ancient monsters diverge. This is hardly surprising given the fact that our respective approaches are tailored to illuminate our connected but distinct literary material. Lowe seems to be primarily concerned with the mechanisation of the monster figure for other purposes: his work aims to get to the heart of how monsters are used, and how and what they mean. Lowe's emphasis therefore remains in the world of the visual as well as the external appearances and threats belonging to a given monster. Lowe explicitly articulates the emphasis of his enquiry: 'Abnormal bodies, being primarily visual in nature, easily furnish imagery for controversial thinking or novelty, but also for hermeneutic problems of various kinds. This explains their fascination for postmodern critics.'<sup>44</sup> This emphasis on the visual aspect of monsters sometimes locks Lowe's analysis into the psychoanalytical models that are regularly recapitulated in monster studies. For example, Lowe often emphasises the ways in which misogyny is at the root of the construction of monstrous feminine figures. This is of course an important contribution to Latin literature studies, but a regular trope in monster studies more generally.

Two decades before the publication of Lowe's volume, Robert Garland published a full-length social history on Greco-Roman monstrosity entitled *The Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*.<sup>45</sup> Garland's book emphasises the social attitudes surrounding deformed, disabled, and abnormal bodies in Greco-Roman cultures. Garland reads a wide range of figures troped as 'monstrous' in order to help illustrate larger trends in social history. Indeed, Garland's emphasis on the body, spectacle, and visuality attached to the notions of

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<sup>44</sup> Lowe (2015) 34.

<sup>45</sup> Garland (1995).

deformity and disability results in a study that looks at monsters and contemporary attitudes toward monsters and bodily difference in the classical world.

Garland therefore explores monsters and the monstrous from an exteriorising perspective. He sees the construction of monstrosity and deformity as part of a larger Greco-Roman (but more Greek than Roman) project of defining the self through the othering enabled by the rhetoric of monstrosity. Although Garland's approach differs from my own, it is a helpful social history that was written during the nexus of the early years of scholarly development in monster studies as well as disability studies, predating Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's definitive *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* in 1996. Roughly contemporary with Garland's book is Catherine Atherton's 1998 edited volume, *Monsters and Monstrosity in Greek and Roman Culture*. This volume contains a variety of essays on individual monsters or groups of monsters, but gives little attention to monsters' voices and does not consider the role of the monster within the cosmos broadly.<sup>46</sup>

More recently, studies of individual monsters have also made important contributions to monster studies. In 2012, Marianne Hopman published a full-length book on the monster Scylla, where she follows the single figure through her role and resonance in a variety of poetic contexts. She traces Scylla from her first appearances in epic poetry (with special focus on the *Odyssey*) to her subsequent role and reception in classical and Hellenistic Greece, and then through to Augustan Rome. Throughout a range of literary genres, Hopman explores the nuanced ways in which the single figure poses threats to the various contexts in which she appears. Hopman uses Scylla's gender (threatening gynocology; threatening virginity) as a unifying thread throughout.

Another volume that offers an extensive and comparative treatment of a monster figure in Greco-Roman antiquity is Daniel Ogden's *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek*

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<sup>46</sup> See also Mazoyer and Pérez Rey (2007), similar in scope and organisation.

*and Roman Worlds*. Ogden's book traces the figure of the supernatural serpent in a number of different forms, from pure serpents to hybrid monsters with serpentine parts. His study is therefore not of a single monster figure with a consistent 'character', but rather of an archetypal monstrous form. Ogden helpfully grapples with problems of classification that are indeed relevant to this study. In discussing how the *kētē* of ancient myth are not called *drakontes* – as indeed many of the beings in this study are not explicitly called *terata* – Ogden argues that there exist sufficient thematic points of correspondence between *drakontes* and *kētē* in the mythical narratives he studies, and thereby he makes a case for their inclusion in the study.<sup>47</sup>

A further study that has made contributions to monster studies both within and beyond antiquity is David Gilmore's 2003 book, *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors*. This volume includes a useful introduction for monster theory in general and a chapter on monsters in antiquity. Although Gilmore displays a repetitive tendency both to psychoanalyse<sup>48</sup> and to generalise the monster figure across cultural traditions and periods, his volume makes two claims that have great significance for this thesis. The first is the ontological proximity between monsters and the divine in ancient thought;<sup>49</sup> and the second is the shared exceptionalism of monsters and heroes,<sup>50</sup> who seem in some contexts (though not all, as Gilmore would lead us to believe) to function as metaphysical doppelgangers of one another.<sup>51</sup>

Taken in concert, these volumes all contribute significantly to our understanding of the role and nature of the Greek mythological monster, but overall they do not consider the monster's voice as a central component of its identity.<sup>52</sup> However, recent influential developments in the 'sensory

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<sup>47</sup> See Ogden (2013) 5, 116-147.

<sup>48</sup> See Gilmore (2003) 175, 181-84, 189-190.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>51</sup> See Chapter 2 for discussion of Odysseus and his monsters and Chapter 3 on Heracles and Geryon.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Hopman (2012) 43-44, who gives attention to Scylla's voice in her section on the dissolution of language throughout Odysseus' adventures in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*. Another piece of scholarship that puts monstrous

turn' in Classics make a scholarly interest in the monster's multi-sensory manifestations rather than merely its visual impact most timely.<sup>53</sup>

This project seeks to contribute to the scholarship on ancient sounds and soundscapes specifically through the figure of the monster. Furthermore, this thesis contributes to the scholarship in the sub-field of cultural studies called 'monster studies' through sonically- and vocally-driven readings of Greek mythological monsters.<sup>54</sup> Although human, animal, and divine sounds have already been discussed by Andrew Ford and Andrew Barker,<sup>55</sup> this thesis is the first concerted exploration of the sounds that come from monsters. The chapters that follow consider monstrous sounds that possess different modes of impact, which might somehow be considered dangerous, transgressive, powerful, and strange. Throughout Greek epic, lyric, and tragedy, I consider nonhuman sound and trans-categorical communication; the following chapters explore the ways in which Greek poetry depicts scenes of communication across the different categories of being.

Too often the monster is theorised silently, seeming to maintain only a visual and cognitive resonance in Greek antiquity and elsewhere. This thesis argues that monsters' sounds participate in their semiotic function as well as their capacities for horror and marvel. As Sean Gurd writes, 'What terrifies does so with an open mouth and a strong voice.'<sup>56</sup> The practice of listening to the sounds made by monsters allows for readings that get 'inside' the monster in a way that its other sensory manifestations do not. Vocal expression in its many incarnations therefore enables access

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voices at the centre of its analysis is Goslin (2010). Pietro Pucci's volume of essays *The Song of the Sirens* makes important contributions about poetry and narratology concerning these and other nonhumans in Homer, but does not deal directly with voice or sound.

<sup>53</sup> Butler (2015); Butler and Purves (2013); Connor (2014); Gurd (2016); Loraux (2002); Nooter (2012).

<sup>54</sup> For recent discussions of the role and reception of the field of 'monster studies' in the academy, see Mittman (2012) and Lowe (2015) 28. See also *ibid.*, 30 on Classics as a unique resource for monster studies.

<sup>55</sup> Barker (2002); Ford (1992).

<sup>56</sup> Gurd (2016) 2.

to a more refined reading of these monsters, which are so often thought of as impenetrable, hollow, or as lacking legible interiority. To think of the monster as a visual parcel of threat does not give us the whole story when we are faced with monsters that also speak, sing, shriek, bellow, bark, and roar.

### **Rethinking the Monster**

The problem of definition immediately presents itself to any scholar who embarks upon a study of monsters and monstrosity. What do we mean when we say ‘monster’? Which beings are included and which are excluded?

My reassessment of the monster emerges in response to structuralist approaches to monstrosity, which posit the monster as other, as fundamentally ‘non-’, as eternally in between. Whether the monster is typed as hybrid or as other, this style of negative definition often emphasises all that the monster *is not* without ever telling us what the monster *is*. Indeed, we often find the monster intellectually situated in the space in-between divine and bestial, bestial and human, or two or more animal species. This orientation makes the monster’s deviations and interstices its definition, which is no doubt useful, and even crucial, to understanding the identity and operations of the monster.

But there are several positive ways to define the monster that are then ignored in this othering and ‘in-between’-ing approach – an approach which has come to function as the norm in monster studies. I argue that it is essential to have something like a working framework for the monster that complements the negativity of the monster with some positivity. This approach bestows upon the monster its own existential identity instead of a mere negation or conflation of other ontological categories. In other words, my project is less an attempt to define the monster,

and more an attempt to articulate the positive qualities of the Greek monster that can usefully complement that well-worn understanding of the monster as between and beyond categories.<sup>57</sup> The central and unifying feature that, for the purposes of this thesis, identifies a creature as a monster is the fact that it threatens and destabilises the identity of those who encounter it.<sup>58</sup> In addition to this, there are other features that are unique to the Greek concept of the monster, which include its physical deviance from other discrete categories of being,

As is usually the case in monster studies, the most practical starting point is to take a look at the actual Greek terms translated into the English word ‘monster.’<sup>59</sup> The Greek terms available do not have precise correspondence with the English word ‘monster’, but they exhibit resemblances. This lack of pure translatability, of course, presents a problem for a study like this one. Can we think of the monster as a category at all, when Greek does not do so in the same way that English does? When Greek situates the monster in an entirely different set of contextual associations? When no Greek word carries the precise signifying force of ‘monster’ in English?<sup>60</sup> I argue for the utility of the English word ‘monster’ for the sake of this study, but I include a caveat that the monster as an ontological category was imagined in a fundamentally different way in the Greek imagination than is suggested by the term ‘monster.’<sup>61</sup>

The primary Greek words that denote the concept ‘monster’ are τέρας, πέλωρ, and θήρ (and their cognates).<sup>62</sup> Greek also offers particular subdivisions of monstrosity, including but by

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<sup>57</sup> See also Felton (2013) 104-105.

<sup>58</sup> See discussion of the term ‘monster’ on pp. 9-11 of this thesis.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 104; Lowe (2015) 8-14; Scott (2001) 1; Steel (2013); Williams (2011) 6-7. For a discussion of the ‘present scholarly valence’ of the English word ‘monster’, see Mittman (2012) 5-6. For the discussion of how ‘reality’ vs. ‘imagination’ figure into modern definitions of the ‘monster’, but not medieval (or ancient) definitions, see Mittman (2012) 5-6.

<sup>60</sup> For discussion of the Latin terms *monstrum* and *monere*, see Lowe (2015) 8; Williams (2011) 6-7; Murgatroyd (2007) 1; Gilmore (2013) 9.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Wengrow (2014), who uses the term ‘compositives’ instead of ‘monster.’

<sup>62</sup> πέλωρ has a secondary noun form πέλωρον in Homer, which typically refers to monsters (Gorgon in *Il.* 5.741 and *Od.* 11.634), strange animals (a giant stag *Od.* 10.168, Circe’s bewitched animals, *Od.* 10.219), or more generally,

no means limited to δάκος ('animal of which the bite is dangerous'),<sup>63</sup> κνώδαλον ('wild creature'), κῆτος ('any sea monster or huge fish'), and other terms that signify the species of monster, such as Γοργόνη ('Gorgon'), ὕδρα ('Hydra'), and Χίμαιρα ('Chimaera'). Τέρας is perhaps the most commonly seen of the three primary terms, and it encompasses several corresponding terms in the English vocabulary. 'Monster' is one translation, and 'sign' and 'marvel' are others. Τέρας is used to refer to mythological monsters such as Medusa, Typhon, and Cerberus, but also as signs from the gods; τέρας can appear together with πέλωρ, as it does in a description of Athena's armour in *Iliad* 5.741-742:

ἐν δέ τε Γοργεῖη κεφαλῇ δεινοῖο πελώρου,  
δεινή τε σμερδνή τε, Διὸς τέρας αἰγιόχοιο. (*Il.* 5.741-742)<sup>64</sup>

I invoke this description of the Gorgon not in order to demonstrate semiotic equivalence of τέρας and πέλωρ, but to illustrate that monsters, in the concrete embodied sense (δεινοῖο πελώρου) can often be considered to be signs from the gods, Διὸς τέρας αἰγιόχοιο. The fact that the word τέρας, like the word πέλωρ, can mean both 'monster' and 'sign' is a result of the fact that the monster is understood as a being that can itself be a sign. This may seem obvious, but the crucial point is that 'monster' and 'sign' are not two distinct definitions of τέρας, but mutually meaningful definitions.

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signs from the gods (*Il.* 2.321) The adjectival forms of πέλωρ, πέλωρος (in Hesiod) and πελώριος (in Homer), have a rather wider range of referents, like the word 'monstrous' in English. Homer uses the term broadly, referring to certain gods, heroes, monsters, as well as inanimate objects. Notably the gods to whom Homer assigns πελώριος are Hades (*Il.* 5.395) and Ares (*Il.* 7.208), and this description is fitting in the *Iliad* due to the nature of martial rather than magical conflicts in this poem (as opposed to the concrete monstrous opponents of the *Odyssey*, where the term is applied to specifically malicious and giant creatures like Polyphemus).

<sup>63</sup> All the translations in this section are taken from LSJ.

<sup>64</sup> Adjectives that often occur in relation to monsters are δεινός and σμερδαλέος (or σμερδνός, as here). These adjectives are more capacious than those listed above, and do semantic work outside of describing monstrosity, but they are important and frequent descriptors of monsters. Homer uses δεινός of Charybdis at *Od.* 12.260, and also of Odysseus at *Od.* 22.405, likened to a lion and covered with the blood of those he has slain. The adjective σμερδαλέος indicates a terror of sensory experience, either of sight or of sound. See also *Il.* 2.309 of a serpent, *Od.* 6.137 when he washes up on the Phaeacian shores, *Od.* 12.91 of Scylla, *Il.* 7.479 of Zeus. These words therefore invoke the horror of sensory experience of something, rather than the nature of the thing itself.

Another example of a τέρας in Greek tragedy is the sea-bull in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, which offers another dual manifestation of the word's semantic capacity. The sea-bull presents embodied, physical monstrosity: it is oversized, out-of-place (in the sea), violent, and terrifying. The sea-bull also operates as a sign, insofar as the bull emerges as a portent coming from Poseidon.

The word πέλωρ, already seen in the description of Athena's Gorgon-faced armour, has a similar set of meanings to τέρας, with slightly different inflections. Rather than a simple sign or marvel, πέλωρ is typically used to indicate something more darkly ominous, a 'portent' or 'prodigy' as well as a plain 'monster.' As Lowe notes in his discussion of the term, the mythological monsters to which πέλωρ is attached include Polyphemus, who is described as a lawless monster (*Od.* 9.428); Scylla, described as an evil or treacherous monster (*Od.* 12.87); a serpent, in the Homeric hymns (*Hym. Hom. Ap.* 374), and a giant dolphin (*Hym. Hom. Ap.* 401). Even the god Hephaestus is described as a πέλωρ as a reflection of his deformity (*Il.* 18.410), which indicates the fact that the boundary between monsters and gods is a fluid one, to say the least.

Thus we can see that πέλωρ is used in Homer particularly to evoke hybrid, giant, malevolent, or deformed nonhuman entities, which sometimes have portentous or prodigious significance. A further semantic difference between τέρας and πέλωρ is that τέρας is used to describe portents that are not physically hybrid or oversized more frequently than πέλωρ. Τέρας is also the primary word used for the idea of atypical bodies and biological aberrations, like the type discussed in Aristotle's *Generation of Animals*.

The third key term is θήρ, which typically denotes any creature in the broader category of wild beast, beast of prey, or a wild and potentially dangerous animal, as opposed to a familiar or domestic creature. Θήρ is also frequently used of mythological monsters like the Sphinx, centaurs, and satyrs, and perhaps would be best rendered in English by 'creature' or 'beast' for its

combination of bestiality and danger. Compared to τέρας and πέλωρ, θήρ is the monster term that does not also imply marvel or portent – although creatures attached to this word certainly can provoke such responses in texts. It is the term that most emphasises the bestial, savage component of the monster.

From these terms, we learn that the Greek concept of monstrosity operates in a semantic field that includes portents, communications from gods, and physical deformity. Although the two kinds of monsters can never be fully separated, this thesis features mythological monsters whose origins are located in primordial or pre-Olympian eras, rather than the abnormal births and monstrous races that appear in Herodotus' *Histories*. This selective emphasis comes out of an attempt to limit these readings to explorations of the ways in which epic, lyric, and tragedy represent the monster and its sounds in poetic language.<sup>65</sup>

Throughout the following chapters, I demonstrate that Greek literature from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to the 5<sup>th</sup> century tells a shifting story about the monster, and that it does so through sound. By listening to the monster, we can chart modifications in its role in the text and in the cosmos. I argue that changes in the depiction of monsters occur less as a consequence of chronological time, and more as a response to the textual universe and its cosmogonic state posited by the poets. We meet different modes and scales of monsters depending on the mythic time and space of the story at hand, and for this reason, it is hard to imagine Hesiod's Typhon, Homer's Sirens, and Stesichorus' Geryon all inhabiting the same ontological category as suggested by the term 'monster.' The first of these creatures is an enormous hybrid creature with hundreds of heads who threatens to take control of the universe; the second is a set of singing feminine beings whose voice threatens the lives of individual sailors with its destructive beauty; the last is a triple-bodied, winged man who

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<sup>65</sup> For monstrous races in Herodotus, see Felton (2013) 122-126, Rood (2006), and Wittkower (1942).

lives apart from society and threatens no one until his cattle are stolen by Heracles. Beyond hybridity, excess, superhuman power, and the destabilisation of categories, there are not clear essential features that unite these three figures into a coherent category. In the attempt to elucidate these disparate strands of monstrosity, I argue that listening is an activity far superior to defining the monster.

Throughout the Greek poetry considered in the following chapters, three major modes of monstrosity emerge. These are characterised by the realm in which the monster threatens: Greek literature presents monsters in the *nonhuman* realm, monsters in the *heroic* realm, and monsters in the *domestic* realm. A few caveats must be established about this typology of monstrosity before continuing. First, certain monster figures can be seen occupying multiple or hybrid typologies, and so these categories should not be understood as fixed or mutually exclusive. These categories are useful for helping articulate the different modes of threat and how sound participates in them, but when monsters exceed and spill over beyond the boundaries of categorical definition, we are not to be surprised. The simultaneous invitation and defiance of category itself tends to be a transcultural monstrous phenomenon, applying to the monsters in this study and elsewhere.

Secondly, cosmogonic ‘earliness’ or ‘lateness’ – what we might even call the monster’s ‘age’ – is not a guaranteed indicator of the characteristics a monster might exhibit. In other words, the cosmic moment of a monster’s generation can help us understand its cosmic positioning, and it may inform its threat, its interactions, and its mode of monstrosity; but it does not predetermine these factors. Indeed, the mortality or immortality of monsters lends complexity to this issue.<sup>66</sup> Primordial monsters, for example, who remain alive through mortal generations are eventually forced to interact with a different universe from the one into which they were born. This is the case

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<sup>66</sup> For a text-based discussion of mortality in Hesiodic monsters, see Chapter 1, 53-55. See also Chapter 3, 139-142 for Geryon’s uncertainty about his own mortal status.

for Aeschylus' Erinyes, who take on monstrous aspect because of the disjunction between their outdated mode of divinity and the contemporary Olympian model. The Erinyes are primordial monsters born into the nonhuman realm, but they menace Orestes in the domestic realm in the *Oresteia*.

The first sort of Greek monster – the monster that operates in the nonhuman realm – is found predominantly in Hesiod's *Theogony*. These monsters are generated at an early stage in the cosmos and have a hand – either helpful or hostile – in the shaping of the Olympian universe. This kind of monster is typically descended from primordial gods and interacts primarily with other nonhuman figures including gods, other monsters, and elemental forces. Examples include the Hesiodic Cyclopes, the Hundred-Handers, and Typhon. This is not the only kind of monster we find in Hesiod's *Theogony*, however: later in the *Theogony*, and also in Homer, Stesichorus, and Pindar, we meet a somewhat more anthropomorphic form of monster. This second kind of monster – the monster that traffics in the heroic realm – instigates an antagonistic challenge to an individual hero rather than to the gods themselves.<sup>67</sup> Further examples include Polyphemus, the Sirens and Scylla in Homer's *Odyssey*, and the Gorgons in Pindar's *Pythian* 12.<sup>68</sup> The scale of the monster's threat can shift cosmically, from the scale of universal order to heroic adventure. These encounters between monsters and heroes are typically located in strange, remote geographies.

This kind of monster usually interacts with the human realm only insofar as the hero himself is mortal and lives in human communities. Still, he transcends typical humanity, either in his genealogy or his abilities. In most cases, non-heroic mortals are not threatened by the monster

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Felton (2013) 113-114, who argues that these hero-monster encounters pose a 're-enactment' of Zeus' battle with Typhon. Felton suggests that once Zeus removed chaos from the nonhuman realm, 'order had to be established in the world of men as well.'

<sup>68</sup> Examples of monsters battling gods exist outside of the material in this thesis, and include the Gigantomachy and Apollo's battle with the serpent. See Felton (2013) 111-13 and Ogden (2013) 40-47 for discussion.

that remains both literally and metaphorically out at sea. The ‘encounter scene’ between heroes and monsters functions as a mutual meeting of hybrids.<sup>69</sup> monsters are often hybrid in terms of species and ontology, and heroes too are often human-divine hybrids in terms of genealogy, character, and capability. The heroic realm is the most dominant domain of monsters in Greek myth and literature, where the threat is typically posed to a mortal hero rather than to collective, civilised humanity.

But in addition to monsters that tussle with other nonhumans and with hybrid, superhuman heroes, Greek literature also presents a third type of monster. This third type tends to appear in texts that situate their plots in later cosmic time than the primordial context of the *Theogony*. This type of monster gradually abandons the strange geographies of epic and historical writing, and it moves inward. It begins to occupy a less heroic and more domestic realm, thereby posing threats in civilised spaces. Examples of monsters who threaten in the human realm are the Erinyes in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides* and the sea-bull in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*. These monsters’ lives pre-date those of the humans they antagonise, and they seem to erupt violently from the supernatural realm into the civilised world, resulting in a clash of cosmic order.

The texts that I have selected for analysis in the following chapters demonstrate that the monster poses different types of threat according to both specific literary context and the broader traits of the genre at hand. Throughout Greek literature we may trace a story of the monster as a shapeshifting and unfixed semantic category. This story of the mutating monster figure is best told, I will demonstrate, through sound and voice. This mode of literary listening reveals that the monster’s voice varies according to the textual world that produces it. Overall, the form the monster takes and the way its voice is presented function as a kind of response to the way that a

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<sup>69</sup> See Clay (2003) 150-174.

given genre or text situates the human within the cosmos. The monster moves from the remotest elsewhere into the human city, self, and body from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. The monster resounds differently – both metaphorically and sonically – according to the priorities and parameters of the texts in question.

The question emerges: is this story of monstrous migration best understood as a developmentalist narrative, reflecting a trend in the history of thought surrounding the figure of the monster? Or does it instead reflect generic development? In other words, does this story emerge as a consequence of changing Greek attitudes about monsters that develop over time? Or is the story a response to the concerns and particularities of Greek poetic genres? Or, are all these modes of monstrosity always possible and present within the figure of the monster, just exploited and explored at different times according to different textual needs? This thesis argues that the monster shifts in accordance with the concerns of literary genre more than as a part of any coherent developmentalist narrative relating to a general history of thought – though the two arcs are admittedly entangled. The genres covered in this thesis take on different cosmological concerns and orientate the action of the narratives within cosmic order differently. The difference in orientation within the cosmos is what informs the shape, behaviour, and voice of the monster. More specifically, the individual literary texts covered in this thesis all have their own orientation within cosmic time and order, and these individual literary worlds equally inform the figuration of the monster.

### **The Scale of Monstrous Sound**

One of the questions I posed at the beginning of this Introduction was about ‘monstrous sound’ and whether it can be understood as a meaningful category. Now I wish to reiterate that monsters vocalise

quite diversely from one another, but ‘monstrous sound’ can be understood as a feature of the monster that clarifies its level of antagonism to, or incommensurability with, either the cosmos or an individual hero.<sup>70</sup> In other words, ‘monstrous sound’ is more of a hermeneutic approach than an acoustic category that has distinctive sound effects. It will become apparent that the more a monster reveals itself as a willing participant in Zeus’ cosmic order, or the more easily a mortal hero can navigate and defeat it, the more legible its voice. The texts examined in this thesis host a continuum of vocal monsters ranging from the antagonistic, violent, and incomprehensible at one end, to the more cooperative and comprehensible on the other.

The first monster at the antagonistic end of the continuum is Typhon, who poses the prime threat to Zeus’ reign and the cosmos generally. Typhon has an inexplicable multitude of divine and bestial voices, both hybrid and excessive:

φωναὶ δ’ ἐν πάσῃσιν ἔσαν δεινῆς κεφαλῆσι,  
 παντοίην ὅπ’ ἰεῖσαι ἀθέσφατον· ἄλλοτε μὲν γὰρ  
 φθέγγονθ’ ὥς τε θεοῖσι συνιέμεν, ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖτε  
 ταύρου ἐριβρύχεω μένος ἀσχέτου ὄσσαν ἀγάρου,  
 ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖτε λέοντος ἀναιδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντος,  
 ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖ σκυλάκεσσιν ἐοικότα, θαύματ’ ἀκοῦσαι,  
 ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖ ροίζεσχ’, ὑπὸ δ’ ἤχεεν οὔρεα μακρά.  
 καὶ νύ κεν ἔπλετο ἔργον ἀμήχανον ἦματι κείνῳ,  
 καὶ κεν ὃ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἀναξεν,  
 εἰ μὴ ἄρ’ ὄξυ νόησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε·  
 σκληρὸν δ’ ἐβρόντησε καὶ ὄβριμον, ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα  
 σμερδαλέον κονάβησε καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ὑπερθεν  
 πόντός τ’ Ὠκεανοῦ τε ῥοαὶ καὶ Τάρταρα γαίης. (Hes. *Theog.* 829-841)

Typhon’s is the most multiple of all monstrous voices, since it carries tones divine (*Theog.* 829-830) and animal. Typhon is furthermore represented as a sonic marvel, θαύματ’ ἀκοῦσαι (*Theog.*

<sup>70</sup> Felton (2013) 104 argues that there are no benevolent monsters in Greek mythology, but overlooks the innocuous Geryon, who has no evident antipathy toward humanity and even seems to have positive social relationships with humans including Menoites and Eurytion. The Centaur Chiron is also noted widely in Greek poetry for his benevolence (on Centaurs in Pindar, see Chapter 3, 152-155).

835). The passage describing Typhon's voice has its own marvellous textual sound effects, such as the quintupled repetition of ἄλλοτε, which sonically emphasises the extreme and multiple otherness of this monster.<sup>71</sup> Zeus' contrasting singular and unified sonic response of thunder, which then makes the earthly, heavenly, and oceanic realms resonate and resound with his power, presents a clear elemental harmony that triumphs over Typhon's cacophony. The soundscape here demonstrates that cosmic violence and negotiation is happening on a sonic level, as the powerful harmony of Zeus violently negates the monstrous discord of the incomprehensible Typhon.<sup>72</sup>

The Sirens in Book 12 of Homer's *Odyssey* represent a shift from the senseless and cacophonous voice of Typhon. Using their musical and linguistic voices as weapons, the Sirens exude an attractive, mellifluous soundscape that capitalises on human desire. These creatures pose a threat to the individual and to the self, by means of voice entirely. This Sirenic mode of voice operates in a way that threatens to derail the entire narrative thread of the *Odyssey*, but does not pose any threat to general cosmic order in the way our earlier Hesiodic monsters did. Indeed, the Sirenic voice is directed at mortal sailors, and in the case of the *Odyssey*, their voice is targeted at Odysseus' own desires to hear and luxuriate stories of his *kleos* in the Trojan War. Thus the Sirens threaten Odysseus' *nostos* by means of orderly and spellbinding song as opposed to forceful violence.<sup>73</sup>

In Stesichorus' poem that takes a monster as its subject – the *Geryoneis* – Geryon's voice sounds surprisingly human, and furthermore operates within typically epic, heroic discourse and sentiments. The poet directly quotes Geryon, who uses the epic formulae characteristic of Stesichorus' poetry, and whose utterances are not at all sonically alien to the realm of human voice.

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<sup>71</sup> See Chapter 3, 160-164 for the sound effects surrounding the depiction of Typhon in Pindar's *Pyth.* 1.

<sup>72</sup> Goslin (2010). See also Chapter 1, 60-65 for more detailed discussion of Hesiod's Typhon and his voices.

<sup>73</sup> For detailed discussion of the Sirens' voices in Homer's *Odyssey*, see Chapter 2, 98-113.

The voice participates in the poem's larger project of demonstrating the problem of polarising the hero and the monster. Geryon's voice and speech are the primary means by which Stesichorus reveals that, in the encounter between Geryon and Heracles, the monster and the hero are interstitial twins: they both possess levels of humanity but never fully embody it. They both reveal what it is to be human through their particular difference from it, in their excess, in their multiplicity, in their traces of divinity. It is of course fitting that Geryon should sound like a human: the triple-bodied man is excessively human, and poses no physical or active threat to human beings or to the universe until Heracles comes to steal his cattle on his tenth labour. Thus we can *hear* that Geryon does not impose major cosmic threat or violence, as we can understand his quoted, directly delivered, and wholly human voice.<sup>74</sup>

Listening to the voice of the monster allows us to move away from an external focus on the monster's appearance or violence, and toward an examination of what can be understood as the monster's possible interiority. This interiority is constituted by its motivations, its appetites, and its agency. Throughout this thesis, I attempt to give voice to the marvellous sonic monsters of archaic and classical Greek poetry. We may see the monster as a symbolic body that acts as a sign or a signifier, but its voice reveals that the monster is in fact a leaky signifier, whose vocalisations participate in its monstrosity and its marvel.

### **Monstrous Suites: Mapping the Generic Terrain**

Chapter 1, 'Hesiod's *Theogony*: The Role of Monstrosity in the Cosmos', deals with Hesiodic monsters in the *Theogony*, a poem whose action is dominated by nonhuman agents. As a result of this more thoroughly imagined and delineated nonhuman realm, which includes encounters

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<sup>74</sup> For my reading of Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*, see Chapter 3, 128-149.

between monsters, gods, and other semi-divine hybrid creatures, precise shades of the category of ‘monster’ emerge more distinctly than in other Greek poems. The *Theogony* therefore enables further specification within the modes of monstrosity presented in the mythic tradition more broadly, according to features such as: antagonistic or cooperative relationship with the gods; relationship or lack of relationship with humans; role and location in the development of the cosmos; and familial relationships among monsters. Through Hesiod, I argue that the more a monster behaves in cooperation with Zeus’ cosmos, the more humanoid its voice will sound.

The following chapter, ‘Homer’s *Odyssey*: Mingling with Monsters’, remains in the realm of early Greek hexameter poetry, but shifts to the slightly more anthropomorphic monsters of Homeric epic. I argue that Odysseus ‘mingles’ with the monster – as he experiences it through his different senses – and imitates the behaviour of the monster in order to defeat or escape it. This chapter discusses the encounters with Polyphemus, Circe, the Sirens, and Scylla and Charybdis, and I argue that the more humanoid the monstrous voice, the more readily the hero can defeat it. I demonstrate that the soundscapes of these episodes in Books 9-12 underscore a movement away from heroic self-sufficiency. They furthermore reveal the hero’s increasing dependence on nonhuman intervention, and finally, Odysseus’ utter helplessness in between Scylla and Charybdis.

Chapter 3, ‘Monsters in Greek Lyric Poetry: Voices of Defeat’, focuses primarily on Stesichorus’ *Geryoneis*, one of the few extant Greek poems in which a monster speaks in direct quotation. I demonstrate that the *Geryoneis* elevates the status of the monster figure, because it reveals certain ambiguities about Geryon’s semi-divine identity and endows him with sometimes heroic and pathetic subjectivity. The *Geryoneis* presents the many cosmic ambiguities facing monsters, hybrids, and demigods, who – in the case of Geryon in particular – are sometimes

unaware of their own ontological orientation. The second part of this chapter deals with the monsters of Pindar's Odes (*Pythian* 1, 3, 12, and *Olympian* 9). Here I argue that Pindar's treatment of monsters takes an almost opposite approach to Stesichorus': the role of the monster in Pindar is always secondary to that of the mythical hero and to the victor of whom Pindar sings. Pindar's monsters serve as rhetorical accessories to the praise of the hero and exist in a state of having-already-been-vanquished, rather than as a live challenge within the narrative.

Chapter 4 is entitled 'Centripetal Monsters in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* and *Oresteia*.' Although few mythological monsters occupy the tragic stage, the qualities belonging to the figure of the monster in archaic Greek literature are operative within the plot, characters, and aesthetics of the tragic genre. In Greek tragedy we begin to see posed by humans and their tragic crises the questions elsewhere posed by monsters. In this chapter, I give readings of Aeschylus' Io in *Prometheus Bound* and the Erinyes in the *Oresteia*. These readings explore the instances of monstrous sound and noise-making in their concrete, staged forms in Greek tragedy. I demonstrate that these sounds must be heard and received in order to both establish and preserve social and political order. The integration of the monster into the human realm can be mapped lucidly through the medium of voice.

The fifth chapter, 'Centrifugal Monsters in Greek Tragedy: Euripides and Sophocles', argues that the inward movement demonstrated by the mythological monster in Greek tragedy is complemented by the *metaphorical* monsters that move outward from and within the tragic hero by means of voice. I argue that the notion of 'trajectory' is central to Greek tragedy's rendering of the monster, which is explored abstractly as a *process* perhaps even more than as an ontological category in its own right. Greek tragedy's unique interest in the figure of the monster takes place on the level of processes of 'becoming other': instead of depicting monsters that are part-human,

part-animal, tragedy stages the process of the human hero becoming animal, becoming woman, and becoming monster in extraordinary circumstances. The case studies in this chapter include Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Heracles* as well as Sophocles' *Ajax*, *Trachiniae*, and *Philoctetes*.

In the afterword, entitled 'Coda: Monstrous Mimesis and the Power of Sound', I discuss the mythological associations attached to the sounds and foundation of the *aulos*. This section draws together a wide discussion of instrumental innovation associated with 'New Music' (with particular attention to the *Scylla* and *Cyclops* of Timotheus) and considers Euripides' *Cyclops*, *Heracles*, and *Bacchae*. Throughout this section I argue for the importance of the connection between the *aulos* and monstrosity, and I discuss the ways in which the soundscapes associated with figures including Athena, Heracles, and Dionysus regularly engage with monstrous sounds and presences.

Throughout this thesis, I use sound to revise our understanding of the Greek monster. I argue that the monster can be positively defined in the following ways that are the hallmarks of the Greek mythological tradition (though they may also have currency elsewhere). First, the monster can be defined as a category destabiliser for whoever or whatever encounters it. Secondly, and complementarily, the monster is also something that calls into question the category of the human, and therefore functions as a site where the articulation of humanity can take place. When Polyphemus eats Odysseus' comrades, for example, he reminds both Odysseus and the audience of the *Odyssey* that humans are animals. Polyphemus' violence against Odysseus' comrades reduces them to helpless puppies, and therefore reminds us that humans actively define themselves as predators rather than prey. The cannibalistic monster is such a source of danger and interest because it threatens to undo the human being's self-assertion of the category of humanity as distinct from animality. Third, the monster is also a channel of communication between the divine

and the human realms. Functioning sometimes as a portent or a sign (e.g. the Euripidean sea-bull), and at other times as an interlocutor (e.g. the Erinyes), the monster figure offers a space for the contestation of relationships between humans and nonhumans.

The fuzzy channels of communication across ontologies create problems in Greek epic, lyric, and drama. The phone lines are connected across god, animal, monster, and man, but the channels are filled with noisy feedback and static that prevent clear interpretation. As John Gould writes:

Divinity, it seems, speaks to man but in a language that he cannot understand, a language where words are no more than ambiguous signs and do not mean what they seem to say, and where, characteristically, they are *replaced* by signs... [Divinity] does, and does not, communicate with man.<sup>75</sup>

Monsters play an important role in the communication between the human and the nonhuman. Monsters can often function as the signs by which gods communicate with men, but they also more emphatically function as the signs by which the universe communicates the possibilities for its own disintegration. It is because of this that the monster is an essential figure of Greek thought which deserves serious attention: the monster itself *is* a voice that questions the organisation of the world. Not merely a symbol to be interpreted, the monster engenders a questioning of fixity itself. Monsters inherently represent a symbolic voice that questions the foundations of ontological knowledge, but they also issue their own marvellous voices and soundscapes which can further reflect or enact their monstrosity upon their audiences. Throughout this thesis, I attempt to turn up the volume on these monstrous voices and to listen to their words, their noise, and their sounds.

I argue that the ways in which monsters' sounds can affect the human body and soul show, furthermore, that the Greek mythical tradition was – well before recent trends in posthumanism – already concerned about defining the very sketchy boundaries between human and nonhuman

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<sup>75</sup> Gould (1985) 22-23.

categories of being. Greek poetry was already using the mysterious power of voice as a channel between self and other; was already negotiating the awareness that we were never really only human; that there was always a rather troublesome interplay between the monster and the man.<sup>76</sup> This discourse about the unstable categories of monster and human takes place through the medium of voice itself.

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<sup>76</sup> Mittman (2012) 1.

## CHAPTER 1

### HESIOD'S *THEOGONY*: THE ROLE OF MONSTROSITY IN THE COSMOS

‘The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents.’ – H.P. Lovecraft<sup>77</sup>

#### Introduction

Hesiod's *Theogony* portrays a world in transition from an unrecognisable void, Chaos, into a cosmic form that is recognisable and comprehensible to Hesiod's contemporary audience.<sup>78</sup> The nonhuman realm and this transition from disorder into order dominate the poem. Hesiod's *Theogony* therefore offers a uniquely thorough articulation of nonhuman relationships in comparison with the other literature examined in this thesis. Both the general themes and the monsters in Homer, Stesichorus, Pindar, and tragedy are more anthropocentric, and these texts regularly emphasise exchanges between nonhuman and human characters, rather than exchanges between nonhumans.<sup>79</sup> As a result of the *Theogony*'s more thoroughly delineated nonhuman realm<sup>80</sup> – which includes a range of encounters between monsters, gods, and other semi-divine hybrid creatures – more precise shades of the category of the monster emerge here than in other Greek poems. The monster emerges as an essential component in the organisation of the Hesiodic cosmos.

The *Theogony* enables further classification within the category of monster, according to features such as: antagonistic or cooperative relationship with the gods; relationship or lack of relationship with humans; role and position in the development of the cosmos; and familial relationships among monsters. The poem also provides a unique poetic perspective on the monster:

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<sup>77</sup> Lovecraft (2014) 123.

<sup>78</sup> Bussanich (1983); Mondi (1989).

<sup>79</sup> See Mueller (2016).

<sup>80</sup> See Clay (2003) 80 for the view that the *Theogony*'s Olympian perspective marginalises human beings in the text. See also López-Ruiz (2010) 49.

where the *Odyssey* depicts its monsters from the perspective of Odysseus, their human antagonist, and Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* presents the perspective of the monster Geryon, Hesiod's *Theogony* presents a cosmic perspective on the monster that reveals its broader orientation in the religious imagination. Hesiod's narrator situates the monster in cosmic time and in nonhuman sociality, rather than solely in encounters with humans and supra-human heroes like Odysseus and Heracles.

Hesiod's *Theogony* includes the most extensive material for the consideration of the mortality of monsters. Because the poem situates monsters in genealogies, it clarifies the ways in which mortality and immortality correspond – or fail to correspond – to a system of nonhuman 'genetics.'<sup>81</sup> Medusa, for example, is the only mortal Gorgon, and has two immortal sisters.<sup>82</sup> The issue of monstrous mortality also emerges in the context of monster Geryon, both in the *Theogony* and in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*.<sup>83</sup> Stesichorus' Geryon is himself unaware of his own mortal status and voices his uncertainty about it when he deliberates the mortal significance of his fight against Heracles (Stes. *Ger.* fr.15).<sup>84</sup> The inconsistent mortality in the family tree of Medusa and Geryon demonstrates that monsters' mortality is not clearly patterned by genealogy. This chapter discusses the ways in which Hesiod's genealogical organisation of monsters and nonhumans both illuminates and undermines the search for broader trends in monstrous procreation, life, and death.

In addition to raising the ambivalence surrounding monsters' mortality, Hesiod's *Theogony* demonstrates that monsters are not as cosmically or existentially different from gods as one might initially suppose.<sup>85</sup> Although monsters are typically imagined as occupying an ontological no-man's land somewhere between animal, god, and human, the fact that monsters' relationships with

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<sup>81</sup> See Mueller (2016).

<sup>82</sup> *Theog.* 277-278. Medusa is marked as mortal, unlike her sisters, although they share both parents (Phorcys and Ceto).

<sup>83</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>84</sup> I follow Finglass' numeration of the fragments.

<sup>85</sup> Gilmore (2003) 10 discusses this concept, not in the context of the *Theogony*, but in the context of ancient Greco-Roman monsters generally.

gods are sometimes familial or social reveals that creatures that we call monsters are not *ipso facto* antagonistic to the cosmos or the gods.<sup>86</sup> This sets Greek mythological concepts of monstrosity apart from post-Christian impressions of monsters and monstrosity.

Furthermore, Hesiod's narrator does not always delineate the ontological differences between monsters and gods, even within shared branches of a family tree. Kronos, for example, is the brother of the Cyclopes and the Hecatoncheires, but as Clay notes, both of these groups 'diverge from what is evidently an already established theomorphic standard of appearance.'<sup>87</sup> The common ancestry of certain gods and monsters allows us to consider whether or not monsters manifest family resemblance or share traits with siblings or parents.

Parsing the family dynamics among gods and monsters offers insight into the existential status of monsters. These relationships allow us to ask whether monsters are born in their particular forms by 'accident', or rather with some particular parental design in mind: can gods have any intentional impact on the physical forms assumed by their progeny? We may also ask what separates a monster, descended from a god, from one of his or her divine siblings in the same natal family. What do the family resemblances between monsters indicate about the larger practices of divine parthenogenesis and procreation? The uncertainties of monstrous generation or procreation have been underexplored in Hesiodic scholarship, and they can shed significant light on the genealogical patterns within monstrous families.<sup>88</sup>

Hesiod indicates that conceptions of monsters can occur in copulations that are characterised by the narrator as passionate and forceful.<sup>89</sup> These descriptions of divine and

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<sup>86</sup> Examples of familial and social relationships between monsters and gods include, for example, Zeus' political partnerships with the Cyclopes and the Hecatoncheires (*Theog.* 139-146, 617-663).

<sup>87</sup> Clay (2003) 16-17.

<sup>88</sup> A notable exception to this is Park (2014).

<sup>89</sup> Hesiod's narrator uses φιλότητι to describe sexual intercourse that produces monsters at *Theog.* 306, 333, 625, and 980. Hesiod also uses φιλότητι to denote copulations that result in gods at 125 (Night and Erebus produce Aether and Day) and elsewhere. *Theog.* 374 presents a copulation that is characterised both as forceful (ὕποδμηθεῖς) and

monstrous copulation indicate that both parents do not need to intend to generate monstrous offspring, since descriptions of these copulations often involve one parent ‘overpowering’ the other. There are numerous examples of monsters born out of consensual unions as opposed to forceful sexual encounters (always initiated by the male god). Observations about procreation can offer further insight into the nature of monstrous generation as well as the monster’s *raison d’être* and role in the universe. Monsters do not emerge as a direct result of parental intent, but there are subtle instances in the *Theogony* wherein specific parental volition results in accordingly monstrous progeny. As with monsters’ mortality, there is no widespread consistency in this matter, which seems to vary in each circumstance.

Hesiod’s chronological orientation, which begins in primordial time that far predates the temporalities of the other texts studied in this thesis, results in a fully developed and discursive portrait of the nonhuman realm. As a result, Hesiod also gives insight into the ways in which monsters play a role in the ordering of the cosmos. The *Theogony* demonstrates that monsters are not always problems or challenges to be overcome in a narrative, but rather that monsters can take on more complex roles within nonhuman social and political dynamics. For instance, monsters may aid the gods in the structuring and delineation of certain realms (e.g. Cerberus, who guards

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passionate (ἐν φιλότητι). The conflation here of these two kinds of copulation (those instigated by force and by desire) are not in fact entirely distinct in the imagination of Hesiod’s narrator. Other examples of φιλότητι with regard to gods appear at 375, 380, 405, 625, 822, 920, 923, 927, 941, 944, and 1005. Uses attached to humans appear at 961, 970. Uses in human-god couplings appear at 1009, 1012, and 1018. Cf. *Theog.* 132, where Gaia’s parthenogenetic procreation which occurs without passion, ἄτηρ φιλότητος. On the notion that Gaia’s procreative potential renders her not ‘limited to pure femininity’, see Vernant (1990) 465-466. Although considering sexual encounters along a binary of consensual and non-consensual classifications is not the most culturally appropriate framework for Hesiod’s *Theogony*, it is useful nonetheless for our purposes here. Indeed, it allows us to refute the possibility that both parents need to ‘will’ a monster into existence. The narrator gives passive forms of δαμάζω that refer to a range of sexual relationships at *Theog.* 327 (the sole instance where the progeny is a monster), 374, 453, 962, 1000, and 1006, and δμηθεῖσα at *Theog.* 453. West (1966) ad 453 cites metrical reasons for the differing uses of δμηθεῖσα and ὑποδμηθεῖσα.

the gates of Hades;<sup>90</sup> Echidna, who guards the Arima;<sup>91</sup> the serpent that guards the Hesperides).<sup>92</sup> Monsters may perform assistant roles (e.g. Pegasus),<sup>93</sup> and participate in resolving quarrels between gods (e.g. Cyclopes and Hecatoncheires).<sup>94</sup> Monsters may also function as instruments of gods' violence (e.g. Hera's relationship with the Hydra and the Nemean lion).<sup>95</sup>

The roles which monsters fill may also develop over the course of the monster's own lifespan, rather than being fixed in their duties from birth. Both the Cyclopes and the Hecatoncheires are sets of monsters who are born without clearly articulated roles within the cosmos, but both groups ultimately attain specific functions through either political reorientation (e.g. Hecatoncheires)<sup>96</sup> or more ambiguous transformations (e.g. Echidna)<sup>97</sup>.

Hesiod's broad range of monsters reveals that the figure of the monster should not be understood as a category that remains entirely separate from the gods in orientation and quality. The *Theogony* also demonstrates that monsters' role in the universe is not predestined or fixed, but rather is subject to different forms of negotiation and change. In this sense, the category of the monster has a particular slippery and mutable inflection in Hesiod's cosmos.

This chapter is organised into two sections. The first elaborates upon some of the 'monster theory' outlined in the Introduction. I use Hesiod's *Theogony* as an important window into the ontological status and function of the Greek mythological monster. In this section, I argue that there are no clear genetic codes that dictate the physiognomy, character, behaviour, or mortality of monsters. Noting the organisation of the majority of Hesiod's monsters into one family tree, I

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<sup>90</sup> *Theog.* 767-774.

<sup>91</sup> *Theog.* 304-305.

<sup>92</sup> *Theog.* 333-335.

<sup>93</sup> *Theog.* 285-286. West (1966) ad 285-286 compares Pegasus' role to that of 'the doves that bring [Zeus] ambrosia' in *Od.* 12.63.

<sup>94</sup> *Theog.* 139-146, 617-663.

<sup>95</sup> *Theog.* 330-332.

<sup>96</sup> *Theog.* 617-663.

<sup>97</sup> *Theog.* 295-305.

argue that there is a small suggestion that monsters are considered to function as a category. Yet Hesiod's genealogies reveal that monsters are in some ways fundamentally distinct from the gods (or at least the Olympian gods) and that monsters still consistently resist general characterisation of any kind, even though they are organised in narrative groups. Hesiod's *Theogony* presents a prismatic anti-category of the monster by grouping creatures together in a way that gestures towards but ultimately defies family resemblance or genetic patterning.

The second section of this chapter deals with Hesiodic soundscapes and offers close readings of the narrator's renderings of the voices of Cottus, Cerberus, and Typhon. In the depictions of the monsters in the *Theogony*, the narrator endows the minority of the group with notable voices. Indeed, the majority of Hesiod's monsters are mentioned in passing without reference to their voices or the sounds that they make.<sup>98</sup> Yet despite the fact that most of Hesiod's monsters are not described in the context of a detailed soundscape, all the major moments of cosmic transition are marked by significant soundscapes. The monsters whose voices receive attention in the text are the monsters who have the most thoroughly developed relationships with the Olympian gods, and those who bear important roles in cosmic history or preservation, such as the Hecatoncheires (Cottus, in particular), Cerberus, and Typhon.

In this chapter, I argue that the monster's voice offers crucial insights into its cosmic position broadly, and its relationship with Zeus, more specifically.<sup>99</sup> The more humanoid and coherent the monster's voice, the more cooperatively that monster behaves within the Olympian cosmic order

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<sup>98</sup> This list of non-vocal monsters includes: the Hydra, Echidna, Ceto, Geryon, Orthos, Gigantes, Erinyes, Chimaera, Harpies, Phorcys, the Nemean Lion, the Sphinx, the Gorgons, and the Cyclopes. The fact that these monsters' voices are not described or quoted in detail does not, however, indicate that they are not associated with important sonic moments or episodes within cosmic history. Hesiod's narrator gives no description of the Cyclopes' own sounds, for instance, but they are credited for giving the thunder and lightning bolts to Zeus. These monsters are therefore implicated in Zeus' loud-thundering soundscape throughout the *Theogony*, because they enable its resonance. See also Introduction, 11-12.

<sup>99</sup> On Hesiod as the first poet concerned with the justice of Zeus, see Griffith (1983b) 38, 52-53.

(and vice versa). The more bestial, or the more ontologically hybrid a monster's voice, the greater is the threat that it poses.

Cottus, Cerberus, and Typhon each occupy different points on the Hesiodic continuum of sonic monsters. They provide the major case studies in this chapter. Their voices each reveal something about their cosmic status beyond the levels of 'threatening' and 'problematic', but they may be grouped together in this way to demonstrate the wide range of positions adopted by monsters in the *Theogony*. On the least antagonistic, most cosmically cooperative end of this continuum lies Cottus, one of the Hecatoncheires. The Hecatoncheires liaise with Zeus in the Titanomachy: Zeus releases them from bondage and enlists their supradivine force in aid of the Olympians against the Titans. Cottus responds to Zeus and speaks in direct quotation, in a voice that flows evenly with the discourse of the rest of the *Theogony*. There is nothing vividly monstrous in his expression or voice because he, along with his brothers, is an assistant in the maintenance of divine order. Cooperation with the Olympian order is reflected in coherent discourse.

In the centre of the continuum, we find Cerberus. His voice is non-linguistic and entirely canine. His fifty-headed barking sonically echoes the sheer danger and savagery of which he is capable. Cerberus himself polices the boundaries between the living and the dead. He takes on a more puppy-like demeanour to those entering the realm of the dead, so it follows that his powerful bronze voice (*Theog.* 310-312) is unleashed specifically upon those who attempt to reverse the direction from the realm of the dead into that of the living. Hesiod's narrator also indicates that Cerberus devours these unfortunate souls (*Theog.* 767-774). Vernant points out that bronze, in its connection with the god Ares, 'appears to be closely linked in Greek religious thought with the power possessed by the defensive arms of the warrior' and thereby 'fills the enemy's soul with

terror.’<sup>100</sup> Cerberus’ brazen voice thereby identifies his maws as the locus of his violence.

Although his voice is extralinguistic and does not communicate concepts or thoughts, he uses it in a way that is logically comprehensible: in order to prevent this perversion of mortal order. The voice itself therefore participates in maintaining the organisation of the universe. Cerberus lies in the middle of the continuum because his voice is non-semiotic, but still communicates. He is dangerous, excessive in body parts, size, and volume, and his voice matches his sheer power; but still, he enforces the preservation of boundaries and therefore takes on a participatory role in the maintenance of Zeus’ cosmic order.

Typhon occupies the furthest extreme of this vocal continuum, both in the *Theogony* and in all the literature covered in this thesis. He has one hundred draconic heads, each of which emits different kinds of voices, ranging from divine speech to animal sound (*Theog.* 824-835). Typhon’s voice frustrates the possibility of communication and sense by its sheer cacophony; its hybridity forces a complete breakdown of ontological coherence.<sup>101</sup> Of all of the monsters in the *Theogony*, Typhon poses the greatest challenge to the organisation of the universe, as he threatens to usurp the rule of Zeus and change the course of cosmic history (*Theog.* 836-838). His voice – which fails to fit into ontological schemes more profoundly than that of any other monster – echoes the threat he poses to the organisation of the universe more broadly. Sonically, Typhon’s voice stages the precise threat that is posed by his entire being.

I conclude this chapter by drawing a connection between the way Zeus and Gaia respectively relate to monsters. I argue that Zeus fosters a relationship to the monster that functions as an inverse to that posed by Gaia. Where Gaia contains the monster within herself, and gradually gives birth

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<sup>100</sup> Vernant (1983) 13.

<sup>101</sup> Goslin (2010) 357-359 notes the mismatch between Typhon’s excess quantity of voice and his inability to use those voices to communicate.

to a line of monsters that were originally part of her, Zeus incorporates the power of the monster into himself and his cosmic order. Zeus' victory over the Titans is ultimately decided by his successful incorporation of monsters into his artillery.<sup>102</sup> The stability of the Hesiodic cosmos depends on monsters, in that their unfixed ontology endows the universe with a substance necessary to complement the polyvalence of the gods.

### **Part I: Monstrous Genealogies**

Hesiod's *Theogony* presents a wealth of monsters in the context of their origins and familial relationships. This broad perspective on the monster clarifies some basic traits or patterns, and thereby allows for fruitful cross-comparison. In this section of the chapter, I focus on Hesiod's depictions of a range of monsters (not only the sonic ones). I comment upon the reproductive behaviours of monsters, their relationships in the nonhuman realm, their mortal status, and their varying and unique positions in cosmic order and time.

Identifying a coherent Hesiodic categorisation of the monster is a complex venture. The *Theogony* seems to present a category of being that is ontologically 'other' from god, mortal, and animal – and that category includes Typhon, Phorcys, Ceto, Echidna, Cerberus, Orthos, Geryon, the Gorgons, the Graeae, Pegasus, and others. Yet despite the familial relationships between many of these monsters (particularly in the line descending from Earth's children Ceto and Phorcys), and despite the *Theogony*'s recurring uses of the word *πέλωρ* and its cognates,<sup>103</sup> there seems to be relatively little existential substance that binds these creatures into coherence.

A blend of mortal and immortal, divine and bestial, helpful or antagonistic to both gods and humans, the monster's role in the organisation of nonhuman forces is fluid and irregular. The

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<sup>102</sup> Cf. Vernant (1983) 11-12 on the Titans as 'the deities of hubris.' See also Loney (2014) and Mondi (1984).

<sup>103</sup> *Theog.* 159, 173, 179, 295, 299, 479, 505, 731, 821, 845, 856, 858, 861.

monster seems not only to exist in a space ontologically between god, man, and animal, but moreover seems to offer an imaginative space for beings outside the known and comprehensible ontologies that populate the universe. Hesiod's monsters – through their varied forms of engagement with the universe and their own varied existential characteristics – do not conform to known identity categories: they reveal, in action, the many and varied possibilities of trans-ontological sociality. They show what possible mutations of existing ontologies look like, behave like, and sound like.

Hesiod's monsters occupy the marginal space between categories, and they demonstrate the infinite modes of filiation possible in the cosmos. This reading of Hesiod's monsters may seem like yet another instance where a scholar repeats the regular trope of monster studies, according to which monsters are fundamentally 'beyond categories' and therefore impossible to pin down. My argument goes beyond that trope insofar as I argue that Hesiod *uses* the inter-ontology of the category that we call monster in order to act as a prismatic mirror of the nature of the universe itself. Hesiod's monsters perform a shifting, mobile ontology, whose own unboundedness and fluidity help to reveal an infinite number of possible modes of discourse between the more fixed ontologies manifest in the universe – or gods, men, and beasts. Like Anne Carson's Sapphic brackets, the monster 'impl[ies] a free space of imaginal adventure.'<sup>104</sup>

This monstrous prismaticism that Hesiod presents reflects the essence of Zeus' organisation of forces and roles within the universe. In this polytheistic system where the respective wills of the gods are not always harmonious, and in a universe where so many divergent and complex divine entities emerge from a shared mother (Gaia), there is not a clear sense of divine will or order against which monsters can universally operate. This separates Greek monsters from monsters in

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<sup>104</sup> Carson (2002) xi.

the traditions of Abrahamic religions and mythologies, where monstrosity is typically understood as directly antithetical to godliness and notions of natural order.<sup>105</sup>

The reason Zeus' reign is everlasting and successful is because he responds with sensitivity to the prismatic, multivalent character of the universe itself. Building his system of universal justice on the dispensation of roles, responsibilities, and honours, Zeus thereby acknowledges that the harmony of the universe is contingent upon recognising its fundamentally polyvalent nature: he structures a cosmos that honours that polyvalence. The system of Olympian divinity imposed by Zeus, with its own internal variance, is the system most suited to Hesiod's universe. Furthermore, it is the most sustainable power structure at any stage in Hesiodic cosmic history because it recognises the impossibility of ontological absolutism and emphasises instead the dispensation of roles. Hesiod's monsters are another representation of that fundamental essence in Hesiod's cosmogonic universe. Instead of representing a fourth category of being to complement god, man, and animal, the Hesiodic monster provides a space for fluid, shifting relations with and among these ontologies.

### **Monstrous Origins**

The question of the origins of monsters bears significant consequences for our understanding of the monster's existential identity. In asking this question, we discover that monsters can be born both parthogenetically and reproductively, which means that monsters lack consistent biological origins. The most prolific monster parents are Gaia,<sup>106</sup> Phorcys, Ceto,<sup>107</sup> and Echidna,<sup>108</sup> each of

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<sup>105</sup> See Daston and Park (1981) and (1998), Wittkower (1942).

<sup>106</sup> Her children include Phorcys, the Cyclopes (with Ouranos as father); the Hecatoncheires (with Ouranos); Typhoeus (with Tartarus); the Erinyes, Gigantes, and Melian Nymphs (with blood from Ouranos' castrated testicles).

<sup>107</sup> The offspring of Phorcys and Ceto include the Graiae, the Gorgons, Echidna, and the Hesperian Dragon.

<sup>108</sup> Her progeny by Typhoeus include: Orthos, Cerberus, Hydra, and Chimaera.

whom belong to different generations of the same family tree. Gaia – both as an independent parent and with male partners – functions as a source of many kinds of beings, both divine and monstrous. Her monstrous offspring result from both parthenogenesis and endogamous copulation. Gaia couples with her parthogenetically birthed son, Pontos, and begets both Phorcys and Ceto.<sup>109</sup> It is impossible to determine exactly to what extent parental intent informs the shape and behaviour of their monstrous progeny, and therefore the question ‘how do monsters come to be?’ is ultimately unanswerable. We do have a few instances in Hesiod where the births of monsters appear to emerge as a result of some form of parental intention, and we also have instances where the parents’ intentions would seemingly be incongruous with the child’s monstrous shape and agenda.

The generation of Gaia’s first child, Ouranos, sheds light on the question of monstrous origination. Although Ouranos is not a monster, his birth reveals that gods – and in particular, Gaia – can manipulate the form and function of their offspring. In a clear purpose clause, Hesiod’s narrator describes Gaia’s parthenogenetic generation of Ouranos as a purposeful act (ἵνα) that simultaneously allows earth to be physically enclosed (ἔέργοι) and for her to remain the seat of the gods:

Γαῖα δέ τοι πρῶτον μὲν ἐγένετο ἴσον ἔωυτῇ  
Οὐρανὸν ἀστερόενθ’, ἵνα μιν περὶ πάντα ἔέργοι,  
ὄφρ’ εἴη μακάρεσσι θεοῖς ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ. (*Theog.* 126-128)

Although this particular account of the birth of Ouranos reveals the mother’s stake in the child’s genesis and his form, Hesiod more often leaves unspecified the relationship between parents and their monstrous offspring. It seems that Gaia’s earlier parthenogenetically born children are embodied in particular forms based on their mother’s intent, whereas her later children, born

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<sup>109</sup> See Park (2014) 265-266 who points out that Hesiod’s monsters differ from Tiamat’s in that they are largely the products of sexual reproduction rather than parthenogenesis.

through sexual reproduction, are not.<sup>110</sup>

Although Hesiod never divulges why Gaia gives birth to particular monsters in their particular forms, there exist monstrous attributes within the primordial deity that she must gradually exorcise from herself and externalise in the form of her monstrous progeny.<sup>111</sup>

### Monstrous Mortality

Just as the connection between parents' wishes and the monstrous forms of their offspring is ambiguous, so too is the outcome of monsters' mortality. Genetics alone does not function as a consistent predictor of a monster's mortal status.<sup>112</sup> A good example of this is found in the Gorgon sisters. Hesiod's narrator does not clarify why Medusa is the sole mortal of the Gorgon sisters, but instead merely states the distinction between her mortality and her sisters' immortality. He in fact tells his audience very little about the Gorgons, introducing them in the family tree of Phorcys and Ceto and listing them after the Graeae:

Φόρκυϊ δ' αὖ Κητῶ Γραίας τέκε καλλιπαρήους  
ἐκ γενετῆς πολιάς, τὰς δὴ Γραίας καλέουσιν  
ἀθάνατοί τε θεοὶ χαμαὶ ἐρχόμενοί τ' ἄνθρωποι,  
Πεμφρηδῶ τ' εὐπεπλον Ἐνυῶ τε κροκόπεπλον,  
Γοργούς θ', αἱ ναίουσι πέρην κλυτοῦ Ἰκεανοῖο  
ἐσχατιῇ πρὸς νυκτός, ἴν' Ἐσπερίδες λιγύφωνοι,  
Σθεννώ τ' Εὐρυάλη τε Μέδουσά τε λυγρὰ παθοῦσα·  
ἦ μὲν ἔην θνητῆ, αἱ δ' ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἀγήρω,  
αἱ δύο· τῇ δὲ μῆ παρελέξατο Κυανοχαίτης  
ἐν μαλακῷ λειμῶνι καὶ ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσι. (*Theog.* 270-279)

Between the Graeae and the Gorgons there emerges faint family resemblance: both are clustered, pluralised feminine monsters. The Gorgon sisters – Sthenno, Euryale, and Medusa – live in

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 270-271.

<sup>111</sup> Clay (2003) 171.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Stewart (1966) on the proto-rationality of Hesiod's genealogies. Cf. Bazopoulou-Kyrkanidou (1996), who attempts to identify coherent genetic traits in this family tree.

fittingly monstrous geography: on an edge, past Ocean, near Night and the Hesperides.<sup>113</sup> Across these daughters of Ceto and Phorcys, different age ranges appear: eternally aged (the Graiae), eternally ageless (Sthenno and Euryale), and maiden-aged (Medusa).

Medusa is singled out for her mortality (*Theog.* 277),<sup>114</sup> her correlated suffering of woes (*Theog.* 276), and for her sexual intercourse with ‘the dark-haired one’, Poseidon (*Theog.* 278-289). She is also the only childbearing Gorgon, though her childbearing is unconventional. The birth of Chrysaor and Pegasus through her severed neck is highly unusual and evocative of other strange births, like that of the Erinyes or Aphrodite.<sup>115</sup> When Medusa is slain and beheaded by Perseus, two non-identical twin children emerge from her neck: the mortal Chrysaor and the immortal Pegasus.

Chrysaor presumably takes an anthropomorphic form, since his body is not described other than through its sword-bearing state: the narrator etymologises his name as meaning ‘having a gold sword’, ἄορ χρύσειον ἔχει (*Theog.* 283). Although physically quite distinct from one another, Charles Segal notes that Pegasus and Chrysaor ‘are associated both with the heavens and with clean, hard metals’ and as such they both transition into the ‘patriarchal, Olympian order of Zeus.’<sup>116</sup> Neither offspring is explicitly identified as having a monstrous body or visage: indeed, the narrator gives no description of Chrysaor’s appearance. We do see elsewhere in the *Theogony* that gods and monsters can both have hands, so the ability to hold a sword is of course not an indicator of Chrysaor’s physical anthropomorphism; we know only that he is mortal when he

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<sup>113</sup> See Segal (1998) 88 on the contrast between Medusa’s association with Nyx and her offspring’s ascension toward the heavens.

<sup>114</sup> Segal (1998) 87 notes that she is the ‘first mortal creature in the cosmogonic processes of the *Theogony*.’

<sup>115</sup> Clay (2003) 154. See also Segal (1998) 87 on the opposition between this ‘bloody’ birth and Athena’s ‘bloodless, “male” birth.’

<sup>116</sup> Segal (1998) 87.

appears in the list of mortals who coupled with goddesses (*Theog.* 979-984).<sup>117</sup> Chrysaor's son, Geryon, however, is described as triple-headed, τρικέφαλον (*Theog.* 287), but this tells us nothing concrete about Chrysaor's physiognomy.

### Gods and Monsters

Chrysaor's twin Pegasus takes the form of a flying horse (*Theog.* 281). The narrator gives no explicit mention of wings, but indicates that Pegasus flies away from his birthplace and finds a position with the gods, thereby implying wings or at least a supernatural kinetic ability in this horse:

χὼ μὲν ἀποπτάμενος, προλιπὼν χθόνα, μητέρα μῆλων,  
ἴκετ' ἐς ἀθανάτους, Ζηνὸς δ' ἐν δώμασι ναίει  
βροντὴν τε στεροπὴν τε φέρων Διὶ μητιόεντι· (*Theog.* 284-286)

Pegasus, a hybrid-bodied creature who is born from a monstrous mother under violent and unusual circumstances, immediately makes himself a frequenter of Olympus and an assistant of Zeus. Instead of occupying the monstrous geography inhabited by his mother and aunts, Pegasus relocates himself within divine geography. He voluntarily facilitates the maintenance of cosmic order through his assistance to Zeus.

Hesiod's narrator gives no indication that there is anything surprising or problematic about the notion that a monster's progeny (which in turn has a hybrid and supernatural body) should ascend to Olympus and become a divine assistant. The boundaries between the monster and the divine are therefore not strictly biological. As elsewhere, the ontology (or ontologies) of a being's parents does

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<sup>117</sup> See Clay (2003) 154-155, who also notes Chrysaor is not explicitly marked for monstrosity but suggests that the sword possibly connects him to the Giants, the Erinyes, and the Melian Nymphs. Clay also links Chrysaor's sword to Athena's armed birth. Segal (1998) 87 designates both of Medusa's children immortal, but does not elaborate on his identification of Chrysaor as mortal.

not result in an inherited and fixed existential status. Furthermore, the being's form itself is not an indicator of what role that being will have in the cosmos.

Echidna is another monster whose relationship with the gods is complex. Echidna is born into the same generation of Geryon's grandmother Medusa. She enjoys a more vividly monstrous description than do Chrysaor or Pegasus:

Ἦ δ' ἔτεκ' ἄλλο πέλωρον ἀμήχανον, οὐδὲν εἰκόδες  
θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὐδ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν,  
σπῆι ἐνὶ γλαφυρῷ, θείην κρατερόφρον' Ἔχιδναν,  
ἦμισυ μὲν νύμφην ἐλικώπιδα καλλιπάρηον,  
ἦμισυ δ' αὖτε πέλωρον ὄφιν δεινόν τε μέγαν τε  
αἰόλον ὠμηστήν, ζαθέης ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίης.  
ἔνθα δέ οἱ σπέος ἐστὶ κάτω κοίλη ὑπὸ πέτρῃ  
τηλοῦ ἀπ' ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν θνητῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων·  
ἔνθ' ἄρα οἱ δάσσαντο θεοὶ κλυτὰ δώματα ναίειν.  
[Ἦ δ' ἔρυτ' εἰν Ἀρίμοισιν ὑπὸ χθόνα λυγρῇ Ἔχιδνα,  
ἀθάνατος νύμφη καὶ ἀγήραος ἦματα πάντα.  
τῇ δὲ Τυφάονά φασι μιγήμεναι ἐν φιλότῃ  
δεινόν θ' ὑβριστήν τ' ἄνομόν θ' ἐλικώπιδι κούρη·  
ἣ δ' ὑποκυσαμένη τέκετο κρατερόφρονα τέκνα· (*Theog.* 295-308)

Echidna is described at a remove from the rest of the narrative. She is introduced in negative terms, including ἀμήχανον and οὐδὲν εἰκόδες | θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὐδ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν (*Theog.* 295-296), which serves to distance and defamiliarise the monster. Furthermore, as Kathryn Stoddard notes,

The φασί of the Echidna passage constitutes the one use of unattributed φασί in the *Theogony*... Following Homeric usage, Hesiod employs φασί to indicate the speaker's reliance on hearsay for the particular piece of information being related. The mingling of Typhoeus and Echidna is a subject on which the Muses cannot – or will not – enlighten him.<sup>118</sup>

Hesiod's φασί therefore emphasises the distance between the realm of the narrator and the realm of the monster, and Clay also points out that the φασί may indicate that this description is beyond

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<sup>118</sup> Stoddard (2004) 50-51. On the Muses' relationship with truth, see Collins (1999), Clay (1988), Griffith (1983b) 48-50, Pucci (1977).

even the Muses' verification. The narrator describes Echidna as an unmanageable monster, *πέλωρον ἀμήχανον* (*Theog.* 295).<sup>119</sup> She is doubly characterised as completely unlike both gods and men. In the first instance, we are told that she is οὐδὲν εἰκοῶς | θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὐδ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι (*Theog.* 295-296), and in the second, we are told that she lives geographically far from both mortals and gods, in a cave below a boulder, *τηλοῦ ἀπ' ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν θνητῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων* (*Theog.* 302). Although Echidna is described one line before as being nothing like the gods, she is also characterised as *θείην* (*Theog.* 297).<sup>120</sup> The adjective *θεῖος* is typically understood to mean 'of or from the gods, divine',<sup>121</sup> and can also be applied to heroes with this sense.

Simultaneously unlike the gods and like the gods, Echidna therefore reveals the complex existential resemblances between monsters and gods. Her hybrid body reveals that she is at least *something* like immortals, in that her upper half resembles a nymph (*Theog.* 298). The rest of her body is not only serpentine, but is overloaded with adjectival descriptors: her lower half takes the form of a serpent that is monstrous (*πέλωρον*), terrible (*δεινόν*), enormous (*μέγαν*), wriggling (*αιόλον*), and raw-flesh-eating (*ὠμηστήν*). What makes Echidna immortal is obviously of a different substance than that which makes the gods immortal, for she eats raw flesh rather than ambrosia and nectar. Echidna is half nymph (298), half serpent (299), half-revealed (298) and half-hidden (300), half unlike the gods (296) and half like them (298 and 305 both characterise her as a nymph, the latter calls her *ἀθάνατος*). She is furthermore half a disruptor of categories through her physical hybridity, and half a maintainer of them, since she guards the Arimae in a place ordained by the gods (*Theog.* 303-304).<sup>122</sup> Like that of her offspring Cerberus, Echidna's monstrosity is put to use in the

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<sup>119</sup> Cf. Cerberus, described as *ἀμήχανον* at *Theog.* 310.

<sup>120</sup> Clay (2003) 155.

<sup>121</sup> LSJ s.v. *θεῖος*.

<sup>122</sup> See West (1966) ad 304 for the uncertainty about Arima as a group of people or a place.

organisation of the world. Another boundary-defying creature herself becomes a guardian of boundaries.

### Monsters and Heroes

Typhon and Echidna produce a group of children – the cousins of Geryon, once removed – who resemble their mother in her misanthropic disposition and become opponents of Herakles during his labours.<sup>123</sup> Like Echidna (*Theog.* 297), her offspring are κρατερόφρονα (*Theog.* 307), or ‘stout-hearted.’ Their first two children are both predominantly canine: the first child, Orthos, she bears as a mate for Geryon: Γηρουνῆτι (*Theog.* 309). This dative hints at the possibility that two-headed<sup>124</sup> Orthos was ‘bred’ out of some sort of intention or purpose – specifically, ‘for’ Geryon. This is a charming ancient example of the trope that ‘people’ (or in this case, monsters) resemble their pets.<sup>125</sup> Echidna’s second canine progeny resembles herself as much as his brother Orthos: Cerberus is ἀμήχανον (*Theog.* 310) like his mother (*Theog.* 295), raw-flesh-eating (ὠμηστήν, *Theog.* 311) like his mother (*Theog.* 300). Furthermore, in the long adjectival descriptions of Echidna and Cerberus, the last adjective describing both of them is ὠμηστήν. The parallelism between the starts of lines 300 and 311 – αἰόλον ὠμηστήν and Κέρβερον ὠμηστήν – reveal both the metrical utility of these phrases but also the resemblances between mother and child.

The body of the third child, the Lernean Hydra, is not mentioned at all, but the narrator indicates that the Hydra has a baleful mind (λύγρ’ εἰδυῖαν, *Theog.* 313). This description stakes a claim for the monster’s intellectual interiority, and furthermore connects it to the baleful nature of

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<sup>123</sup> See West (1966) ad 306, who points out that Typhon and Echidna are particularly well-matched in terms of physiognomy. See also Clay (2003) 154-155.

<sup>124</sup> Hesiod does not mention Orthos’ two heads. Cf. Pindar’s Isthmian 1.13, which does not name Orthos but mentions the ‘dogs of Geryon’ (Γηρυνά... κύνες). Cf. also Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 2.106-108. For depictions of Orthos in iconography, see Mainoldi (1984) 43.

<sup>125</sup> Franco (2014) 93 describes both Cerberus and Orthos as ‘perfect dogs’ and ‘infallible guardians’ because they are ‘exact copies of their ruthless and invincible masters.’

its mother (*Theog.* 304). The narrator also notes that Hera incited the Hydra against Heracles – another example of a monster fulfilling in some way an assistant position for a god – and that Heracles slew it.<sup>126</sup>

Once again, parental immortality offers no guarantee of immortality for monstrous offspring. The family tree that binds most of Hesiod’s monsters into the offspring of Phorcys and Ceto crucially demonstrates that the Greeks did at least consider monsters as occupying some category or group, since most are related to one another.<sup>127</sup> Yet the boundaries and even the characteristics of such a group are nearly impossible to determine. There is great differentiation, and therefore inconsistency, within the group.

The continuation of the genealogy hereafter becomes confused, for Hesiod uses an ambiguous feminine pronoun to continue: Ἡ δὲ Χίμαιραν ἔτικτε πνέουσαν ἀμαιμάκετον πῦρ (*Theog.* 319).<sup>128</sup> The ἦ potentially refers to Echidna, and thus continues the description of her lineage with Typhon, or it moves instead to the children of the Hydra, generated, in the first instance, without a clearly identified father. Whether the Chimaera is the offspring of Typhon and Echidna, or of the Hydra, this creature’s part-serpentine form demonstrates family resemblance to either set of genitors. The Chimaera breathes fire (therefore potentially resembling her fiery-browed father Typhon), and boasts the heads of a goat, a snake, and a dragon (*Theog.* 321-322).<sup>129</sup> We learn that

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<sup>126</sup> Echidna and Typhon’s offspring are a blend of mortal and immortal. *Theog.* 293-295 and 313-318 detail Heracles’ slaying of Orthos and the Hydra respectively. Although not mentioned in Hesiod’s *Theogony*, Heracles’ labour regarding Cerberus is not to slay the dog but to retrieve him. Clay (2003) 158 notes that ‘each sequence of monstrous births culminates in an exploit of Heracles.’

<sup>127</sup> See Bazopoulou-Kyrkanidou (1996) 143 on this family tree’s organisation as a limitation of ‘the contagion of their chaotic promiscuity’; see also Clay (2003) 20-21 and Faraone (2013) on catalogues in Hesiod; see Schwabl (1969) on Hesiodic monster catalogues specifically.

<sup>128</sup> See West (1966) ad 310-315, who gives an overview of the potential arguments for both Echidna and the Hydra as parents. I agree that the uses of πρῶτον, δεύτερον, and τὸ τρίτον preceding the introduction of the Chimaera suggests a packed group of three children. Less convincing is West’s argument that the Chimaera ‘resembles Hydra in having several heads, and might be made her child on this account’, for we have seen repeatedly that family resemblance among monsters is never consistent or logical, and therefore not a decisive factor.

<sup>129</sup> On the unique strangeness of the Chimaera’s physiognomy, see Roes (1934). See also Siegmann (1968).

she is slain by Bellerophon and Pegasus (*Theog.* 325). This indicates that monsters within the same family tree can antagonise one another and occupy fundamentally different positions in the relations between man, god, and monster.<sup>130</sup>

Before her demise, the Chimaera<sup>131</sup> was ‘overpowered’ (ὕποδηθεῖσα, *Theog.* 327) by Orthos, and consequently gave birth to the Sphinx and the largely zoomorphic Nemean lion. In this passage, we begin to see the generations of monsters taking on more thoroughly bestial forms, and we also see them engaging more with human beings:

ἦ δ’ ἄρα Φῆκ’ ὀλοήν τέκε Καδμείοισιν ὄλεθρον,  
Ὅρθω ὑποδηθεῖσα Νεμειαῖόν τε λέοντα,  
τόν ῥ’ Ἥρη θρέψασα Διὸς κυδρὴ παράκοιτις  
γυνοῖσιν κατένασσε Νεμείης, πῆμ’ ἀνθρώποις·  
ἐνθ’ ἄρ’ ὅ γ’ οἰκείων ἐλεφαίρετο φύλ’ ἀνθρώπων,  
κοιρανέων Τρητοῖο Νεμείης ἠδ’ Ἀπέσαντος·  
ἀλλά ἐῖς ἐδάμασσε βίης Ἡρακληείης. (*Theog.* 328-332)

Where Hesiod’s older monsters could potentially generate immense consequences for mortals – indeed, Hesiod tells us that things would be quite different if Zeus had not defeated Typhon (*Theog.* 836-838) – the younger generations of monsters are those which more directly engage or fight with human heroes.<sup>132</sup> This is manifest in the troubles which the Sphinx causes for the Cadmeans and the Nemean lion for its neighbouring humans; this is manifest further in the fact that both these monsters are slain by mortal heroes, Oedipus (who is not mentioned by Hesiod) and Heracles. This passage also contains another instance of Hera utilising the power of a monster, the Nemean lion, as a violent tool in the manifestation of her wrath against Heracles.

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<sup>130</sup> Gods also commit intrafamilial violence in the *Theogony*, a theme which is repeated through the various divine succession stories. See Baumbach and Alexander (2014).

<sup>131</sup> Hesiod again gives an unspecified ἦ instead of clarifying the mother, but I agree with West’s take on this ambiguity. West (1966) ad 326 notes that the fact that Orthos is the father strengthens the reading that Chimaera is the mother.

<sup>132</sup> See De Jong (1987) 68-81.

The narrative thereafter zooms out from this youngest branch of the family tree and mentions the final offspring of Phorcys and Ceto, the unnamed serpent which guards the apples of the Hesperides. This serpent is another monster whose role as a guardian serves the gods and whose body is largely zoomorphic and not ontologically hybrid. This demonstrates yet again that monsters do not take on a consistent mode of relating to the gods or to humans.

## Part II: Monstrous Voices in Cosmic History

### Typhon

There are two dominant factors that set Typhon apart from the other monsters both within and beyond the *Theogony*.<sup>133</sup> The first is the scale of his threat to the universe. Typhon is one of the few monsters to do physical battle with a god, let alone threaten the imminent Olympian lordship of Zeus.<sup>134</sup> The second distinguishing factor is his voice. Typhon's voices and sounds are not directly transcribed or quoted in the poem, for they do not consist of human language. Generally speaking, the methods by which Greek poets make available monsters' voices bear a correlation to their level of threat. The more dangerous monsters' voices are held at a remove from the ears of the audience, and in the case of Typhon, the narrator depicts the marvellous impact of the voice and its multiplicity rather than attempting to render the voice itself.

The narrator's description of Typhon's voice secures its position as the most multiple and hybrid of all the voices of Greek myth, leading critics to point out that Typhon can be understood as '*acosmia incarnate*.'<sup>135</sup> The connection between these two features – threat and voice – is not

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<sup>133</sup> The authenticity of the Typhonomachy has been widely discussed. West (1966) 381-383 covers these arguments and concludes that the passage is authentic. Blaise (1992) 350-369 gives another useful overview of the arguments. See also Ballabriga (1990), Saïd (1977) 199-210, and Worms (1953).

<sup>134</sup> The other physical battle between a god and a monster is the confrontation between Apollo and the Python (Hom. *Hymn. Ap.* 300-304). The *Eumenides* of course dramatises the non-physical duel between the Erinyes and Apollo.

<sup>135</sup> Clay (2003) 26. See also Blaise (1992) 362 and López-Ruiz (2010) 111.

coincidental, but rather illustrates one of the large arguments of this thesis. The sonic and semiotic qualities of a monster's voice correspond to that monster's cosmic position. Typhon, the most subversive and dangerous monster of the entire collective of mythological monsters, also has a voice that most vividly echoes the qualities of the monster itself.

Typhon is born after Zeus' defeat of the Titans. Although scholars have assumed the birth of Typhon somehow occurs as a purposeful gesture from Gaia,<sup>136</sup> the text itself cites only Aphrodite as the cause for Typhon's birth:

ὀπλότατον τέκε παῖδα Τυφωέα Γαῖα πελώρη  
Ταρτάρου ἐν φιλότητι διὰ χρυσέην Ἄφροδίτην· (*Theog.* 821-822)

The διὰ is somewhat ambiguous: it does not preclude the possibility that Typhon's birth was in fact a result of his parents' strategy. On the other hand, the text also gives no indication that Gaia (or Tartarus, for that matter) intended to engender a competitor to Zeus. And as we have seen, Hesiod's narrator occasionally hints at a parent's role in actively creating monstrous progeny, but there is no direct or precise correspondence made between the nature of a monster and its parents' will.

The duel between Typhon and Zeus occurs immediately following the monster's birth. Unlike Zeus, who matures and develops strength for a year before fighting the Titans (*Theog.* 492-500), Typhon is born just after the Titanomachy and yet still before Zeus' ascension to power. Typhon possesses an impressively large and hybrid physiognomy with tireless feet, strong hands, and one hundred serpentine heads (*Theog.* 823-826) – twice as many heads as the Hecatoncheires – which each have licking black tongues. His eyes sparkle with fire wherever he glances,<sup>137</sup> and his

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<sup>136</sup> See Blaise (1992), Clay (2003) 25-26, Goslin (2010) 354 n. 7, López-Ruiz (2010) 112, and Woodard (2007) 89-90. It is possible that scholars conflate Gaia's volition in the birth of Ouranos with the birth of Typhon. It is also possible that the conflation is with Hera in Hom. *Hymn. Ap.* 305-306, who begets Typhon out of vengeful intent.

<sup>137</sup> On the fiery gaze as a canine trait, see Franco (2014) 114-115; cf. West (1966) ad 825 on the fiery gaze as a serpentine trait. For discussion of Typhon's gaze, see Worms (1953) 29-30. See also Ogden (2013).

voice boasts a range of sounds including tones belonging to gods, to domestic animals, and to wild animals:

φωναὶ δ' ἐν πάσῃσιν ἔσαν δεινῆς κεφαλῆσι,  
παντοίην ὅπ' ἰεῖσαι ἀθέσφατον· ἄλλοτε μὲν γὰρ  
φθέγγονθ' ὡς τε θεοῖσι συνιέμεν, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε  
ταύρου ἐριβρύχῳ μένος ἀσχέτου ὄσσαν ἀγάρου,  
ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε λέοντος ἀναιδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντος,  
ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ σκυλάκεσσιν ἐοικότα, θαύματ' ἀκοῦσαι,  
ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ ροίζεσχ', ὑπὸ δ' ἤχεεν οὔρεα μακρά. (*Theog.* 829-835)

There are two possible readings of Typhon's means of expression in this passage. The first would suggest that the monster's different heads generate this range of sounds separately and therefore bring forward a cacophony of transontological sound.<sup>138</sup> The second reading would suggest that all of Typhon's heads vocalise contemporaneously in the same way, therefore insinuating that Typhon's voice shapeshifts across these categories. The soundscape generated by Typhon therefore depends on whether one takes ἄλλοτε to mean 'sometimes' in the temporal sense: that Typhon hisses like a snake in one instance and bellows like a bull in another. If we read ἄλλοτε with a metaphorical inflection, then different parts of the creature vocalise differently but all at the same time.<sup>139</sup>

Although I take the first reading of a more literal 'sometimes' as the most likely 'sense' of the passage, both readings elicit monstrous soundscapes from the monster, albeit in different ways.<sup>140</sup> In the temporal reading of ἄλλοτε, the passage communicates that this hundred-headed draconic god conjures a range of different voices that are multiplied in volume and iteration by one hundred

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<sup>138</sup> See Collins (1999) on the range of sonic taxonomies attributed to Typhon in this passage (φωναὶ, ὅπ', and ὄσσαν). See also West (1966) ad 831-5, who notes that the range of noises associated with Typhon also appears in Nic. fr. 59 (*ap.* Ant. Lib. 28), and Nonnus (1.157-162, 2.250-257, 367-370). See also Clay (1974), Ford (1992), Goslin (2010), and Leclerc (1993). Goslin and Collins in particular connect the concept of *ossa* to the voices of the Muses, and Goslin argues that Hesiod sets up an intertextual relationship between these voices that articulates the rise of Zeus' power. Gurd (2016) 34-36 also puts the voices of the Muses in contrast with the voices of Typhon. See also Agar (1915) and Clay (1988).

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Too (1998) 21, who argues that the voices are threatening because they endow Typhon with 'a limitless capacity to lie and deceive.'

<sup>140</sup> West (1966) ad 831-835 favours the reading of a transforming voice.

separate heads. Each head, therefore, is capable of migrating across sonic taxonomies, as the magnitude of licking serpentine tongues issue out the sounds of both gods and animals. Those who are subject to Typhon's range of voices may reel at the mismatch between the hundred snake heads and the various kinds of sounds that come out of them. This impact is heightened by the amplification through the hundred vocalising heads. Indeed, Typhon doubles the volume and impact of Cerberus's fifty-headed barking.

If we take ἄλλοτε in the more abstract sense, then Typhon can vocalise across different categories in one moment, thus engendering profound cacophony in any moment of utterance. Whether Typhon is a vocal shape-shifter or a vocal hybrid – and the simultaneity of both options is theoretically possible – the soundscape generated by this monster straddles a huge number of spheres.

His voice carries strains of the divine, the bovine, the domestic animal (dogs), and the wild animal (serpents and lions).<sup>141</sup> This Typhonic voice is furthermore deemed incomprehensible in *any* ontological sphere by the Greek word ἀθέσφατον (*Theog.* 830), meaning 'beyond even a god's power to express, unutterable.'<sup>142</sup> As Andrew Ford notes, things that are described as ἀθέσφατος 'confound human cognition and articulation: they are by nature so borderless or unarticulated that they defy expression or boggle the mind.'<sup>143</sup> The magnitude of this sonic phenomenon is captured in the narrator's evaluative comment, θαύματ' ἀκοῦσαι (*Theog.* 834), making Typhon's voice the only sonic θαῦμα in archaic and classical Greek poetry.<sup>144</sup> Stoddard finds the narrator's remark surprising, since its placement emphasises the wondrousness of Typhon's puppy voice rather than some of the other more potentially frightening voices:

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<sup>141</sup> For a detailed reading of the phonic effects of the language in this passage, see Gurd (2016) 32-33.

<sup>142</sup> LSJ s.v. ἀθέσφατος.

<sup>143</sup> Ford (1992) 184. On ἀθέσφατος, cf. Collins (1999) 245-246.

<sup>144</sup> Typhon is also described as a sonic marvel in Pindar *Pyth.* 1.26. For further discussion, see Chapter 3, 160-164.

What Hesiod must be saying is not that the puppies' yelping was in itself remarkable, but that it is perhaps wondrously incongruous that such a powerful being would make a sound like puppies. What makes this monster so dreadful is not only his terrible strength but his mixture of the comprehensible with the incomprehensible, the overtly threatening with the non-threatening, the foreign with the familiar.<sup>145</sup>

The marvel that Typhon poses does indeed emerge from his blending of categories from the divine to both savage and domestic animals. Typhon's puppy-like voice, however, is not inconsistent with other monstrous soundscapes, for Homer's Scylla also barks like a young puppy (*Od.* 12.85-88). It is also perhaps important to note that the bark of puppies can be shrill and piercing: the yelp is therefore not merely the voice of a non-threatening domestic animal, but rather an urgent intrusion of sharp sound, from an animal that straddles the binary of domestic and wild. More significantly, as West notes, the plural form σκυλάκεσσιν at *Theog.* 834 means 'pack of whelps' rather than a single puppy.<sup>146</sup> Therefore σκυλάκεσσιν evokes an even more excessive sonic impact while emphasising the monster's internal multiplicity and plurality.

The multiplicity of Typhon's voice is contrasted by the profound singularity of Zeus' soundscape in his battle against Typhon:

καί νύ κεν ἔπλετο ἔργον ἀμήχανον ἥματι κείνω,  
καί κεν ὄ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἄναξεν,  
εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὄξυ νόησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε·  
σκληρὸν δ' ἐβρόντησε καὶ ὄβριμον, ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα  
σμερδαλέον κονάβησε καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ὑπερθευ  
πόντος τ' Ὠκεανοῦ τε ῥοαὶ καὶ Τάρταρα γαίης. (*Theog.* 836-841)

Unlike Typhon's multiple tones and forms of voice, Zeus emits his singular epithetic sound, which functions as a metonym for the divinity himself. The sound emitted by Zeus is not a voice as such, but serves here as elsewhere to convey, extralinguistically, the god's supreme force and power. Owen Goslin describes the battle between Zeus and Typhon as 'first and foremost a confrontation

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<sup>145</sup> Stoddard (2004) 57.

<sup>146</sup> West (1966) ad 834.

of sounds, rather than physical violence.’<sup>147</sup> Where Typhon’s internal multiplicity generates a spectacular soundscape, Zeus sends out a singular sound which emphasises the god’s cross-ontological *impact*. Where Typhon’s soundscape draws attention to the power of the monster’s expression, Zeus’ soundscape gains its effect from its deep and resounding *impression*. Typhon himself occupies and therefore vocalises a range of categories, whereas Zeus’ force resonates singularly across different kinds of space and different primordial gods. Typhon’s tones – in particular, his hissing tones – do echo from the mountains below, but Zeus’ soundscape echoes across the entirety of Gaia, Ouranus, Oceanus, and Tartarus.<sup>148</sup> Thus Zeus sonically impresses his might not only upon Typhon’s own parents, but also in all the major primordial realms of the universe.

Yet despite the sonic disparity between Typhon and Zeus, they also exhibit some shared characteristics. Monsters and their enemies regularly share a set of common traits.<sup>149</sup> In the battle, both Typhon and Zeus physically harm Gaia with their impact: Zeus’ rushing upon Typhon causes Gaia to groan (*Theog.* 842-843), as does Typhon’s fall (*Theog.* 858). Zeus burns Gaia with a lightning bolt (*Theog.* 861-862), and Typhon burns her as his body falls against her (*Theog.* 865-866).<sup>150</sup> Both Typhon and Zeus are the youngest children of their mothers, Gaia and Rhea respectively, and both vie for the role as lord of the universe. They are of course genealogically related, Typhon being Zeus’ younger uncle, and they both face the problem of being swallowed by their fathers. Zeus of course circumvents his entry into Kronos’ belly through a ruse wherein Kronos mistakes a stone for Zeus and swallows that contently; Typhon is thrown into Tartarus by Zeus at

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<sup>147</sup> Goslin (2010) 364.

<sup>148</sup> On the semantics of hissing, see Connor (2014) 33-52. On Greek preferences for resonant, loud, echoing sound, see West (1992) 44. On Hesiod’s depictions of Tartarus, see Johnson (1999).

<sup>149</sup> See also Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, 145-148.

<sup>150</sup> Clay (2003) 26 argues that these wounds to Gaia indicate that ‘Typhoeus’ defeat is also hers.’ See also Goslin (2010) 364-365 and Bonnafé (1984) 212-216.

the end of their battle, and thus Zeus inflicts onto his enemy the fate which he himself avoided, being engulfed in the body of one's father.<sup>151</sup>

### Cerberus

Before Typhon's defeat at the thunderbolt of Zeus, he and Echidna couple and give birth to a notably vocal monster: Cerberus. This fifty-headed (πεντηκοντακέφαλον, *Theog.* 312) dog appears to have inherited an aspect of his father's multiple, changing voice. Sometimes Cerberus fawns and wags his tail to those entering Hades, but he unleashes his frightful jaws upon those who attempt to escape. The *Theogony* mentions Cerberus twice: the first in the context of the children of Echidna, and the second in the context of the geographical orientation of Hades. The first links his eating of raw flesh to the sounds of his voice:

δεύτερον αὖτις ἔτικτεν ἀμήχανον οὐ τι φατειόν,  
Κέρβερον ὠμηστήν, Αἶδεω κύνα χαλκεόφωνον,  
πεντηκοντακέφαλον, ἀναιδέα τε κρατερόν τε· (*Theog.* 310-312)

And the second describes his hybrid behaviour as both a domestic animal and a wild dog:

Ἔνθα θεοῦ χθονίου πρόσθεν δόμοι ἠχήμεντες  
[ἰφθίμου τ' Αἶδεω καὶ ἐπαινῆς Περσεφονείης]  
ἐστᾶσιν, δεινὸς δὲ κύων προπάροιθε φυλάσσει,  
νηλειῆς, τέχνην δὲ κακὴν ἔχει· ἐς μὲν ἰόντας  
σαίνει ὁμῶς οὐρῇ τε καὶ οὐασιν ἀμφοτέροισιν,  
ἐξελεθεῖν δ' οὐκ αὖτις ἔῃ πάλιν, ἀλλὰ δοκεύων  
ἐσθίει ὄν κε λάβησι πυλέων ἔκτοσθεν ἰόντα. (*Theog.* 767-773)

So although Hesiod's narrator does not directly state that Cerberus' fifty-headed barking is reserved for the dead who attempt to walk out of the gates of Hades and back toward the living, the narrator does depict his voice as χαλκεόφωνον (*Theog.* 311) in connection with his eating of raw flesh. Furthermore, we know that Cerberus does not bark at those who enter Hades, but rather behaves like a happy puppy. The savage, raw-eating, brazen-voiced inflection of Cerberus emerges as a weapon

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<sup>151</sup> Clay (2003) 25-26.

against cosmic disorder. With his maws, Cerberus preserves and polices the boundary between mortal men and immortal gods.<sup>152</sup>

The genealogical evolution from Typhon to Cerberus is audible. Cerberus, the bronze-voiced dog of Hades, uses his voice as a weapon against the confusion of life and death. The voice of Cerberus therefore evolves from his father's mode of vocality, even though its sound is similarly cacophonous and overwhelming with its fifty-headed barking. And though Cerberus' voice is not semiotic or legible in the way that language or music might be, nevertheless it operates in mode that is logically comprehensible, against those who wish to create chaos by disrupting the balance between life and death. Unlike later authors who depict Cerberus as a hybrid form that incorporates serpentine elements into his body, Hesiod's Cerberus displays the inherent hybridity at the heart of the dog in its relation to man. Partly domesticated and fawning pet, and partly vicious beast, Cerberus' hybridity is based on an amplification of the hybrid tension that always haunts man's relationship with the dog.<sup>153</sup> Although Cerberus may operate in a role that maintains cosmic order, his impact on the human imagination is depicted as a highly frightful one that transcends comprehension and articulation: he is both impossible (ἀμήχανον) and unspeakable (οὐ τι φατεῖόν).

### Cottus

Unlike most of the monsters in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the Hecatoncheires come into narrative focus in a state of subjugation. Kronos swallows his Olympian children, but he also places the Hecatoncheires in infernal bonds out of disdain for their monstrosity. Hesiod cites the Hecatoncheires' morphology and size as the cause of their subjugation. Gaia is responsible for the

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<sup>152</sup> West (1966) ad 769-773 discusses Cerberus' representation of 'the devouring aspect of death.'

<sup>153</sup> For this ambiguity in the Greek context broadly, see Franco (2014). For the ambiguity and doubleness of the dog in Hesiod specifically, see *ibid.*, 136-137.

idea of freeing them and thereby utilising their strength:

βριάρεω δ' ὡς πρῶτα πατήρ ὠδύσσατο θυμῷ  
Κόττω τ' ἠδὲ Γύγη, δῆσε κρατερῷ ἐνὶ δεσμῷ,  
ἠνορέην ὑπέροπλον ἀγώμενος ἠδὲ καὶ εἶδος  
καὶ μέγεθος· κατένασσε δ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης.  
ἔνθ' οἱ γ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντες ὑπὸ χθονὶ ναιετάοντες  
εἶατ' ἐπ' ἐσχατιῇ μεγάλης ἐν πείρασι γαίης,  
δηθὰ μάλ' ἀχνύμενοι, κραδίη μέγα πένθος ἔχοντες.  
ἀλλὰ σφεας Κρονίδης τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι  
οὓς τέκεν ἠύκομος Ῥεῖη Κρόνου ἐν φιλόττη  
Γαίης φραδμοσύνησιν ἀνήγαγον ἐς φάος αὐτίς.  
αὐτὴ γάρ σφιν ἅπαντα διηνεκέως κατέλεξε,  
σὺν κείνοις νίκην τε καὶ ἀγλαὸν εὖχος ἀρέσθαι. (*Theog.* 617-628)

Through this depiction of the Hecatoncheires' subjugation, we find an instance in which a divine parent does not have direct or precise agency over the form of his progeny. Ouranos despises the Hecatoncheires for their monstrous physiognomy. This passage furthermore reveals that certain Hesiodic monsters do in fact have some sort of interiority and can experience emotional anguish (*Theog.* 621-623) – something we also find in Homer's Polyphemus and Stesichorus' Geryon.<sup>154</sup> Zeus, taking up Gaia's prophecy, removes their bonds and devises to offer nectar and ambrosia to the Hecatoncheires. Zeus thus upgrades these subjugated monsters to empowered Olympian immortals and makes a speech, quoted in the poem (*Theog.* 644-653), in order to convince the Hecatoncheires to join the Olympians in battle against the Titans.<sup>155</sup>

Cottus' response also appears in the poem in direct response. This dialogue constitutes 'the longest passage of direct speech in the poem'<sup>156</sup> and flows evenly with the tone and discourse of the rest of the text:

“δαιμόνι’, οὐκ ἀδάητα πιφάσκειαι· ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ  
ἴδμεν ὅ τοι περὶ μὲν πραπίδες, περὶ δ' ἐστὶ νόημα,  
ἀλκτῆρ δ' ἀθανάτοισιν ἀρῆς γένεο κρυεροῖο,  
σῆσι δ' ἐπιφροσύνησιν ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος

<sup>154</sup> See Chapter 2, 83-95, and Chapter 3, 128-149.

<sup>155</sup> Vernant (1983) 17-18.

<sup>156</sup> Stoddard (2004) 106. On the scarcity of direct speech in Hesiod, see *ibid.*, 108-109.

ἄψορρον δὴξαῦτις ἀμειλίκτων ὑπὸ δεσμῶν  
ἠλύθομεν, Κρόνου υἱὲ ἄναξ, ἀνάελπτα παθόντες.  
τῶ και νῦν ἀτενεῖ τε νόῳ και ἐπίφρονη βουλή  
ῥυσόμεθα κράτος ὑμὸν ἐν αἰνῇ δηιοτήτι,  
μαρνάμενοι Τιτήσιν ἀνά κρατερὰς ὑσμίνας.” (*Theog.* 655-663)

Where the voices of Typhon and Cerberus present a full-on sonic assault, the voice of Cottus – who is introduced as ἀμύνων, ‘blameless’<sup>157</sup> – instead emerges in dialogue with the king of the gods and even affirms his lordship. Cottus’ speech indicates an advanced level of pathos and interiority, for he notes that Zeus’ act of freeing the Hecatoncheires defied their hopes and endowed them with eagerness to help.

This indicates that within the *Theogony*, some monsters can in fact possess minds and spirits, can suffer and hope, can wish to repay the kindness done to them, and therefore share a certain realm of emotional experience with both gods and humans. Cottus’ speech is not at all marked for its sound, but only for its sense. In fact, the gods even praise the contents of this monstrous voice and gain martial inspiration from it:

᾿Ως φάτ’· ἐπήνησαν δὲ θεοὶ δωτηῆρες ἐάων  
μῦθον ἀκούσαντες· πολέμου δ’ ἐλιλαίετο θυμὸς  
μᾶλλον ἔτ’ ἢ τὸ πάροιθε· μάχην δ’ ἀμέγαρτον ἔγειραν  
πάντες... (*Theog.* 664-667)

Just as the addition of the Hecatoncheires to the Olympian force results in the final ascension of the Olympians over the Titans, Zeus’ release of their brothers, the Cyclopes,<sup>158</sup> also results in a crucial increase in the god’s power. Although the Cyclopes’ voices are not described in the *Theogony*, it is their gift to Zeus that enables the loud thundering sounds he emits throughout the poem. Both the Cyclopes and the Hecatoncheires are deciding factors in Zeus’ ascension to rule,

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 115-116 notes that ἀμύνων indicates that Cottus responds to Zeus in a manner of which the author approves.

<sup>158</sup> On the relationship (or lack thereof) between the Homeric and Hesiodic Cyclopes, see Mondì (1983).

and Zeus' ability to incorporate monsters into his divine reign is what makes him the most capable king of the cosmos.<sup>159</sup>

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that monsters do not take on a fixed categorical identity. This is due to the fact that the cosmos is itself polyvalent, and this divine diversity means that its counterpart – monstrosity – must take on equally dynamic and diverse forms. I have also argued that Zeus' kingship takes on an everlasting quality due to the fact that he chooses not to suppress mighty or monstrous forces, but instead to incorporate them into his power. Instead of fearing the power of others in the manner of both Ouranos and Kronos before him, Zeus systematically incorporates those powers into himself and into his political regime. Although his swallowing of his first wife Mētis may seem like a reiteration of Kronos' swallowing of his children, Zeus' gesture is fundamentally different.<sup>160</sup> He swallows her not only to suppress her ability to bear future children after Athena, but also to engulf her and incorporate her power into his own.<sup>161</sup> Similarly, he unleashes the subjugated monsters that are his paternal uncles. He gains definitive artillery from releasing their power into the universe and incorporating it into himself.

Zeus' subjugation of Typhon presents a possible counterpoint to this argument, and it is clear that Typhon and Zeus emerge in some ways as doppelgangers of one another. The soundscape of that battle, as I have argued, shows why Zeus' dominion over Typhon is subtle but sustainable: where Typhon vocally incorporates a range of ontologies and forms into his own voice, and therefore embodies polymorphism himself, Zeus singularly extends his reach across all categories and realms, resounding his 'Zeus-ness' across categories. Typhon is multiple and polymorphic in

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<sup>159</sup> The idea, however, comes from Gaia (*Theog.* 617-628). On Hesiod's 'poetics of incorporation', see Loney (2014).

<sup>160</sup> On the key role of Mētis in Zeus' sovereignty, see Detienne and Vernant (1978) 55-130 and Blickman (1987) 345. See also Miralles (1993) for discussion of Zeus' wives.

<sup>161</sup> Clay (2003) 18.

his form and his voice, whereas Zeus is multiple and polymorphic in his power and impact. What Typhon represents existentially, Zeus enacts politically.

### **Conclusion: Zeus and Gaia**

Zeus' battle with the Titans also opens many questions about the nature of divinity in its different modes. What are we to make of the length of the battle between the Olympians and the Titans? Why are their forces so evenly matched that battle continues relentlessly for ten years without any side gaining the upper hand? What does Zeus' incorporation of the Hecatoncheires into this battle tell us about the nature of the competition as well as the role of monsters in the universe?

Zeus' embrace of the monstrous tells us three things. The first is that, in a vacuum, the power of the Titans and the Olympian gods is evenly matched. Neither possesses any greater fundamental force. The second is that it is Zeus' embrace of plurality that sets him apart and makes him the most sustainable leader of the universe.<sup>162</sup> His willingness to incorporate otherness into his regime and therefore maximise his own powers reveals a fundamental understanding of the nature of the universe and its dynamics, which the Titans fail to demonstrate, as they emphasise repression of threats rather than incorporation. The third is that monsters fulfil a necessary role in the structure of the universe. In the Titanomachy, the power and force epitomised in the monster figure is the deciding factor that must be utilised and incorporated into political rule in order to introduce the Olympian dominion.

Zeus's relationship with monsters serves as a complement to Gaia's. Gaia is regularly characterised as innately monstrous throughout the *Theogony*. Forms of the phrase Γαῖα πελώρη appear eight times,<sup>163</sup> and the sickle (ἄρπην) that Gaia selects to castrate Kronos is also the sole

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<sup>162</sup> López-Ruiz (2010) 89-90 frames Zeus's distribution of honours as a gesture of gratitude.

<sup>163</sup> *Theog.* 159, 173, 479, 505, 731, 821, 858, and 861.

πελώριον entity in the poem.<sup>164</sup> Beyond having ‘monstrous’ as her epithet, Gaia’s various forms of reproduction reveal that she has latent within herself a range of monstrous aspects. The early energy of the universe is characterised by Gaia’s expression of these monstrous entities from within to without, and the monstrous earth releases monstrosity from within itself during the early organisation of the universe.<sup>165</sup>

A notable echo of this emerges in the figure of Pandora: where Gaia is the first feminine entity to release monsters into the cosmos, Pandora is the first female to release banes for mankind.<sup>166</sup> Both ur-feminine god and ur-feminine mortal function as sources that contain and ultimately unleash monstrosities and evils onto the world. It is the role of masculine principles to then organise, consume, and redirect these different instances of monstrosity into a coherent system.

This process, wherein the monstrous is organised by the divine, occurs elsewhere as an exchange between Athena and groups of monsters. In Pindar’s *Pythian* 12, Athena transforms the Gorgons’ voices into the instrument of the *aulos*, and she gives it to mortals.<sup>167</sup> In Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*, Athena incorporates the Erinyes into Olympian justice. Athena herself represents Zeus’ incorporation of principles of otherness, through her own birth: she is both the example and the agent of the principle of incorporation. In each of these instances, the Olympian goddess must harness these primordial monsters and direct their power into a form of justice that serves rather than threatens Athens. The monster exists, partly because the universe’s structural form was more fluid at the time of monsters’ generation; but also, more profoundly, the monster exists because

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<sup>164</sup> Other forms of πέλωρ and its cognates appear at *Theog.* 295 and 299 to describe Echidna, and at *Theog.* 845 and 856 to describe Typhon.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Vernant (1990).

<sup>166</sup> On Hesiod’s contrastive depiction of Pandora, see Woodard (2007) 120. See also Calabrese de Feo (1995), Lévêque (1988), Marquardt (1982), McLaughlin (1981), Smith (1890), and Wickkiser (2010).

<sup>167</sup> See Chapter 3, 155-160.

institutions of great cosmic power and stability seem to depend on harnessing the mutable and shifting power of the monster: this principle applies equally in the nonhuman and the human realms.

A frequent refrain in ‘monster studies’ is the notion that monsters exist because humans need them to exist, and that monsters function as an essential other against which existential concepts of selfhood can be defined. Yet what we find in the *Theogony* turns out to be quite different: it is not humans who create monsters, as is the case with Dr. Frankenstein and Dorian Gray’s uncanny portrait, but gods who do the creating. It is not humans who must learn to live with monsters, but gods who must learn to acknowledge and incorporate their power. As we will see throughout the following chapters, the dynamism surrounding the monster in this chapter – Gaia’s expulsion of the monster from within to without, Zeus’s incorporation of the monster from without to within – is a theme throughout the literature examined in this thesis. Whether interacting with gods or with humans, monsters regularly course in and out of divinity and humanity. Monsters consistently engage in a process of relation with gods and humans that helps to develop the structures and systems of relations among divinities and mortals.

## CHAPTER 2

### HOMER'S *ODYSSEY*: MINGLING WITH MONSTERS

‘Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long into an abyss, the abyss looks back into you.’<sup>168</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

Homer's *Odyssey* offers the most celebrated and extensive concentration of monster-hero encounters in the Greek poetic canon. Mediated through the voice of Odysseus, who narrates his adventures at sea to an audience of Phaeacian hosts, Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey* present a cluster of monsters that have captivated the imaginations of countless subsequent poets, artists, and scholars. Homer's *Odyssey* is typically considered to be the first surviving written incarnation of the monster narrative in Greek,<sup>169</sup> and indeed, the first literary account of the Sirens, the Cyclopes, Scylla, and Charybdis in the Greek poetic tradition. As a result of this, Homer's *Odyssey* represents a moment of genesis in the poetic development of the monster as a figure both in its own right and in relation to its antagonist – the hero.<sup>170</sup>

In the previous chapter, we have seen how the Hesiodic monsters of the *Theogony* emerge as early participants in the larger process of the evolution and organisation of the cosmos. Often predating the generation of humans and certain Olympian gods, monsters either facilitate or threaten cosmic order.<sup>171</sup> Hesiod's monsters take on a range of shapes and cosmic roles, according to their relationship with the Olympian gods – and with Zeus in particular. Although Hesiod's poetic project deals more specifically with the generation of monsters than with the relationships

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<sup>168</sup> Nietzsche (2003) 69.

<sup>169</sup> For an overview of the major arguments and bibliography concerning the comparative dating of Homer and Hesiod, see Rosen (1997). For a more recent discussion of these issues and comparisons of the literary style of Homer and Hesiod, see Cassio (2009).

<sup>170</sup> Nagy (1979).

<sup>171</sup> See Chapter 1, 68-72 for a discussion of the Hecatoncheires as facilitators and 61-67 for discussion of Typhon as a threat to the cosmos.

between heroes and monsters, the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* provide a series of monster-hero pairings in brief overview.<sup>172</sup>

The monster takes on a more anthropomorphic shape in the *Odyssey*. This is because the poem centres around the sufferings and wiles of a human being who travels within both human and nonhuman networks. As Clay and Graziosi and Haubold have noted, the cosmic state represented in the Homeric epics is more evolved than that of much of the Theogonic material.<sup>173</sup> As a result of the discrepancies in the cosmic historical moments represented in the *Odyssey* and the *Theogony*, the Odyssean monster itself assumes a less primordial and more anthropomorphic aspect.<sup>174</sup> Because of the *Odyssey*'s emphasis on mortal concerns, and because of the monsters' heightened anthropomorphism, Odysseus and his monsters engage in more thorough vocal exchanges than those found in Hesiod.<sup>175</sup> This results in a more sophisticated level of communication between human and nonhuman.

Like Hesiod's monsters, the monsters in the *Odyssey* reside in a narrative cluster.<sup>176</sup> This serves to indicate a loose taxonomy of the monster in the Greek imagination. As discussed in the

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<sup>172</sup> Hesiod's *Theogony* includes Perseus' slaughter of Medusa (280-283), Bellerophon's of the Chimaera (with the help of Pegasus, 219-325), and Heracles' slaughter of Geryon (287-294 and 979-983), the Hydra (313-318), and the Nemean lion (326-332). The *Works and Days* 156-173 describes the heroic age of men – the age just preceding the narrator's own – who are described as demi-gods and who were destroyed by war rather than through encounters with monsters. In particular, the narrator names the family of Oedipus (161-163) and the heroes of the Trojan War (164-165). Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* fr. 25 M-W tells of Deianeira's slaughter of Heracles and his subsequent apotheosis, and fr. 33a.13ff. M-W tells of Periclymenus the shapeshifter who opposed Heracles. *Catalogue of Women* fr. 204.87-93 M-W also mentions the relationship between Chiron and Achilles, and Chiron again appears in fr. 103.1-10 M-W.

<sup>173</sup> Clay (2003); Graziosi and Haubold (2005). Cf. Segal (1992), who suggests that the *Odyssey*'s characterisation of Poseidon seems to invoke a primordial cosmos, prior to the reign of Zeus.

<sup>174</sup> The physiognomic and ontological makeup of monsters therefore reflect literary concerns differently in different contexts. Scylla and Charybdis (*Od.* 12.201-259) are the exceptions that prove the rule in the *Odyssey*, since they physically differ so much from the other monsters featured in the *Odyssey*. Scholars have noted Scylla's Hesiodic traits (West [1966] ad 270-336 and Hopman [2012] 31-34), which suggests that she seems to belong to a different textual universe than that of the *Odyssey*.

<sup>175</sup> The most thoroughly sonic monstrous encounter in the *Theogony* takes place between two nonhuman agents, Zeus and Typhon; and although both entities emit enormous sounds, the poem presents their respective soundscapes sequentially (Typhon, then Zeus) rather than discursively or dialogically.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Heubeck et al. (1988) 4-11 with bibliography. See also Most (1989).

Introduction, the Greek literary and philosophical traditions lack a clear-cut definition for the figure of the monster.<sup>177</sup> And yet, although some of the figures that emerge in these monstrous ‘clusters’ would not meet the definitions of ‘monster’ in the English language,<sup>178</sup> this narratorial organisation of monsters in Hesiod and Homer indicates an understanding of some monstrous commonality among the nonhuman, extra-Olympian hybrids addressed in the texts, if not a taxonomy or a definition. Hesiod’s narrator also groups the monstrous generations together, in *Theog.* 139-153 (the monstrous children of Gaia), *Theog.* 183-187 (more monstrous children of Earth), *Theog.* 270-336 (the children of Ceto and Phorcys – who are themselves children of Gaia). Homer’s narrator, on the other hand, groups monsters, cannibals, and antagonistic races of humans together in a geographical oceanic zone, as well as a narratorial bundle. The *Odyssey*’s narrator lends the stage to Odysseus, who recounts his monstrous encounters in direct discourse to the Phaeacians in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*.<sup>179</sup>

As I argue elsewhere in this thesis, the hero’s ability to defeat or at least survive the monster can be anticipated partially by means of the sounds generated by that monster. The more the monster’s voice resembles human speech in semiotic, linguistic, and sonic qualities, the more manageable that monster becomes. I also argue that Odysseus learns, through a variety of mechanisms, to mimic the monster’s mode of violence and malevolence in order to avoid his own

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<sup>177</sup> Introduction, 23-31.

<sup>178</sup> In the *Odyssey*, for example, the Cicones and Lotus-Eaters – although violent, dangerous, and strange – give no indication of being particularly monstrous in terms of physiognomy, behaviour, or voice. Similarly, the shades Odysseus meets in Book 11 are not in themselves described as monstrous. See Felton (1999) on the figure of the ghost in Greek and Roman antiquity. In Hesiod’s *Theogony*, Earth gives birth to a whole group of monstrous children, but in the same generation as the Erinyes and the Giants (*Theog.* 183-186), she also gives birth to the Melian Nymphs (*Theog.* 187), who are given no monstrous features or traits. It is not their status as nymphs that precludes them from monstrosity, however (cf. Echidna [*Theog.* 305], but the fact that they are not ever described in terms of monstrosity, malevolence, or deformity. All of the progeny of Ceto and Phorcys are explicitly monstrous, with the possible exception of Chrysaor: Chrysaor’s physiognomy is given no description, but we are told that he is the father of Geryon (*Th.* 287-288).

<sup>179</sup> Most (1989) offers a useful overview of discussions of the patterning and structure of these books.

destruction. In other words, Odysseus' encounters with monsters in Books 9-12 all feature the hero's adoption of the properties and qualities of the monster's behaviour. Where possible, Odysseus translates the monster's mode of malevolence into his own responsive violence. Throughout Odysseus' encounters with Polyphemus, the Sirens, and Scylla, instances of the hero behaving like the monster occur on the levels of both behaviour and voice. This is not to cast a moral judgment on Odysseus' behaviour: to behave like a particular monster is not necessarily to behave monstrously. Instead, I argue throughout this chapter that Odysseus mimics particular behaviours exhibited by the monsters he encounters, and uses this mimicry as a means to defeat the monster.

Because the *Odyssey* delivers the narration of its monstrous episodes through the voice of the hero, a complex dynamic emerges surrounding the monster's voice. All of the monstrous voices in the *Odyssey* are filtered through and mediated by the voice of the hero who fights those very monsters, without any living witnesses to corroborate Odysseus' account.<sup>180</sup> Indeed, the tales of monsters are related not by a distant narrator who receives his knowledge from the Muses.<sup>181</sup> These accounts come from a hero whose precarious engagement with the monsters is first-hand. Furthermore, the descriptions of the monstrous encounters come from a hero whose geographical and social circumstances place him in the role of bard and entertainer to his Phaeacian hosts. His life hangs in the balance during the monstrous encounters, and in some ways his survival also

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<sup>180</sup> On the view that the references to the Muses guarantee the truthfulness of the primary narrator, see Rösler (1980) and Ford (1992); for the possibility that narrative truth is destabilised by the figure of Odysseus, see Bowie (1993) and Pratt (1993). Andersen (1990) discusses the fact that a general presumption of narrative truthfulness does not offer a guarantee all characters relate and understand the past in completely consistent ways. For a discussion of these arguments in dialogue, and of the history of the idea that Odysseus' *apologos* is a lying tale see De Jong (1992) and (1997).

<sup>181</sup> *Theog.* 22-34. On the relationship between Homer's narrator and the muses, see Ford (1992) 57-89, de Jong (1987) 45-53 and (1997) 306-308, and Finkelberg (1990).

depends on the charity and *xenia* of his audience, the Phaeacians.<sup>182</sup> These circumstances of the plot and narratology also result in the fact that the monsters' voices are narrated from within – by a human character internal to the plot – rather than an uninvolved poetic voice. Therefore the sonic access to the monsters exists at a remove, rather than coming through the poet by means of the Muses. The soundscape has been experienced immediately by the character who narrates and, on some level, enacts it, when he delivers the monsters' voices in direct speech in his account to the Phaeacians.

As a result of Odysseus' own relationship with the monsters and the circumstances of his storytelling, the *Odyssey* provides a strange mixture of inaccessibility (who can verify Odysseus' story?) and immediate access to the monster and its soundscape (Odysseus has witnessed these monsters himself). Indeed, the deeper encounter between hero and monster that we find in Homeric epic is a feature that distinguishes it from Hesiod's depictions of heroes and monsters.<sup>183</sup> The *Odyssey* also more vividly renders the monster's impact – phenomenological, violent, and otherwise – on its heroic opponent. But although they may be narratorially contained in Odysseus' first-person *apologoi*, monsters – in the Greek imagination and beyond – typically find means to defy their prescribed boundaries.

Scholars have long debated the effects generated by placing the monstrous encounters in the mouth of Odysseus, the hero. Some critics have argued that this narrative strategy locates the epic's monsters in a strange, fantastical realm; this verbally separates the monsters from the more stable Olympian cosmos represented in the larger narrative of the *Odyssey*.<sup>184</sup> Indeed, locating the

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<sup>182</sup> See McConnell (2013) 23 on Odysseus' strategic storytelling to the Phaeacians. See also Most (1989) 19 and Segal (1962); on the liminal status of the Phaeacians as between gods and men, see Ford (1992) 125 and Segal (1962) 26.

<sup>183</sup> See Rutherford (1992) 71 on these adventures as a 'foil' to the 'lies' in Book 14.

<sup>184</sup> See Reinhardt (1996) 73-74 who argues that some adventures require telling in the first-person narrative more than others do. Cf. Richardson (1996) 396, who argues that fact and fiction cannot be fully distinguished in Books 9-

monsters in distant geographies surrounded by manipulative goddesses (Circe and Calypso),<sup>185</sup> monstrous races (Laestrygonians), and otherwise hostile peoples (Cicones) places them at a distinct remove from the challenges faced in the worlds of Troy, Sparta, and Ithaca. But although they may be narratorially contained, monsters, in the Greek imagination and beyond, typically find means to defy their prescribed boundaries. In the *Odyssey*, I argue that this takes the form of a kind of existential transfusion between hero and monster, through the processes of both identification and imitation that Odysseus undergoes in his encounters with the monsters.

For the purposes of this chapter, the vocal ventriloquism that results from Odysseus' narration of the monstrous encounters becomes a source of particular interest. What readers and audiences receive, albeit in different performative registers, is the voice of the monster allegedly quoted, but necessarily imitated, by the voice of the hero.<sup>186</sup> Throughout this chapter, I argue that Odysseus' brand of heroism revolves around a cunning imitation of the monster in order to ensure heroic success and survival. This imitation of the monster occurs also on the level of the voice. Because the text of the *Odyssey* stages a vocal mingling of monster and hero, it becomes apparent that the monsters are never fully contained. So although Homer's narrative places the monsters in traditional monstrous geographies – out at sea, in eerie meadows, in caves<sup>187</sup> – and similarly places them all in the narrative voice of Odysseus and in the past,<sup>188</sup> Odysseus' stories of monstrous encounters reveal that the boundaries between the hero and the monster become unstable upon examination.

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12, unless details from the surrounding books confirm elements of the stories. Cf. Griffin (1980) 48-49 and (2004) 68-71, Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) 3-11, Parry (1994), Peradotto (1990) 92-93.

<sup>185</sup> Odysseus' encounter with Calypso is narrated in Book 5 of the *Odyssey*, so I refer here to geographical placement.

<sup>186</sup> See De Jong (1997) 317-319 for a discussion of the scholarship (Austin [1975], Griffin [1986], Shive [1987], and Friedrich and Redfield [1978]) dealing with the differences in diction and focalisation between character speech (i.e. Odysseus') and the primary narrator.

<sup>187</sup> Polyphemus (*Od.* 9.216-223); Sirens (*Od.* 12.38-54); Scylla (*Od.* 12.59-100); Charybdis (*Od.* 12.100-110).

<sup>188</sup> See Heubeck et al. (1988) 11 on the coherence between the *apologoi* and the rest of the epic.

Throughout the epic, Odysseus and his monsters each exhibit superhuman ambition, agency, and power. They therefore engage in the ‘ontological choreography’<sup>189</sup> that marks them, in Donna Haraway’s term, as ‘companion species’, since both hero and monsters stand existentially near to, but distinct from, the realm of the divine.<sup>190</sup> Indeed, Odysseus reveals a consistent impulse to ‘mingle’ with the monster and with nonhuman figures more generally. This process of mingling occurs on several levels. The first is on the level of strategy, in the sense that Odysseus simulates the technology of the monster in order to defeat it, and he therefore appropriates aspects of the monstrous into himself. There is not a complete fusion of identities between Odysseus and the monsters he faces: the monster does not become the hero and vice versa. However, the moment of the encounter is typically characterised by a sharing of qualities and behaviours between Odysseus and the monster he faces.

The second level of mingling is sensory: Odysseus experiences the monster through sound, sight, touch, taste, and smell, even when such contact can be avoided. The third level is that Odysseus himself, upon return to Ithaca, bears traces of the monsters he vanquished: he takes on the supra-human violence of the monster figure in his slaughter of the suitors.<sup>191</sup> This is not to say that he becomes a monster, nor that Odysseus behaves unjustly within the moral fabric of the *Odyssey*. Instead I argue that there are echoes between Odysseus’ behaviour upon his return to Ithaca and that of the monsters he encounters in Books 9-12. These echoes serve to question the absolute distinction between monsters and heroes. And finally, the fourth level of ‘mingling’

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<sup>189</sup> Haraway (2003) 8, borrowing the phrase from Charis Thompson. Haraway’s use of this phrase characterises the relationship between humans and domesticated dogs, and therefore the context in which she employs her terms is obviously different from Greek mythological context. Still, the concept of two different species that mutually formulate one another is useful for this argument’s articulation of the discourse between monster and hero.

<sup>190</sup> See Clarke (2004) 79-82 on the semi-divinity of Homeric heroes.

<sup>191</sup> See *ibid.*, 88 on the justification of Odysseus’ violence against the suitors within the moral economy of the poem. My claim here deals less with the justice of Odysseus’ slaughter of the suitors, and more with his superhuman, violent prowess. Cf. Nagler (1996) 161.

resounds in Odysseus' voice: in performing his monstrous encounters to the Phaeacians, his voice mingles with the voices of the monsters he quotes. Throughout this chapter, I elaborate upon these various levels of 'mingling.'

This notion of Odysseus' 'mingling' with the monster is underscored by the seduction that the monster exercises over the hero, both within and beyond the specific context of the *Odyssey*.<sup>192</sup> Indeed, fear is not always part of the equation in Odysseus' monstrous encounters. On the contrary, it appears that in the *Odyssey* the monster exerts a power of attraction over the hero as a result of its semi-divine sublimity. The monster, like the hero, is beyond the pale. Throughout this chapter, I argue that Odysseus' special status as a hero induces in him a kind of yearning to experience the monster. The fear that Cohen describes – that is 'really a form of desire' – does not resonate universally in hero-monster pairings in the Greek mythic tradition:<sup>193</sup> straightforward veneration would hardly be substantiated by close-readings of the Greek heroes. On the contrary, Odysseus repeatedly exhibits an impulse to experience the monster through his senses. He willfully chooses to view both Polyphemus and Scylla (against the advice of his comrades and Circe respectively); to taste Circean cuisine and Cyclopean cheese; to hear the song of the Sirens.

Throughout these sensory encounters, the *Odyssey* reveals gradual transformations in the voices of both the monsters and the hero. Odysseus' voice possesses peak agency and *mētis* in the wordplay used to deceive Polyphemus, and then it gradually diminishes in communicability as the story continues. From the divine language and use of *moly* enabled by Hermes (*Od.* 10.281-309), to the year-long discourse between Odysseus and Circe, to the (failed) body language Odysseus uses to communicate while his men's ears are blocked (*Od.* 12.192-194), and the complete lack of

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<sup>192</sup> Gilmore (2003) ix argues that there is always a certain extent to which the hero constructs himself through veneration of the monster, and he articulates a form of attraction between monsters and heroes which also underlies Odysseus' relationship to the monsters he encounters. Cf. Cohen (1996) 16-20.

<sup>193</sup> See Introduction, 15-17 for discussion of Cohen's theses.

language available to Odysseus in his encounter with Scylla and Charybdis (*Od.* 12.234-259),<sup>194</sup> the efficacy of the heroic voice fades.

In his account to the Phaeacians, Odysseus presents a continuum of monstrous voices that begins with the discursive and monologic voice of Polyphemus, on the humanoid extreme. Odysseus then describes the enchanted singing and speaking of Circe,<sup>195</sup> then the intoxicating music of the Sirens; and finally, Odysseus' account reaches a monstrous crescendo in the extralinguistic crashes and yelps generated by Scylla and Charybdis. I argue that Odysseus attempts to mimic and thereby defeat the technology of each individual monster in some way; but the less humanoid the monster's voice, the less successful this practice of mimicry becomes. In this way, the monstrous voice participates in the larger pattern throughout Odysseus' *apologoi*: both the monstrous voice and the adventures more generally migrate from familiarity into strangeness.<sup>196</sup>

### **Polyphemus**

The first monstrous encounter in the *Odyssey* – and perhaps the encounter with the most significant consequences for the plot of the epic – is Odysseus' interaction with Polyphemus. Although Polyphemus is located far from civilised human geography, and therefore seems spatially contained, Polyphemus' presence courses through the fabric of the *Odyssey*.<sup>197</sup> In their respective

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<sup>194</sup> Hopman (2012) 43.

<sup>195</sup> The inclusion of Circe here is not an attempt to claim her as a monster, but she is a central figure in Odysseus' navigation of the monster-filled seas. Her voice in turn facilitates Odysseus' encounters with other monstrous voices. She has many associations with monstrosity which I discuss in this chapter. For the intimate connection between Circe's song and her magic, see Reinhardt (1996) 96. For the question of her status as a monster and a witch, see Felton (2013) 119-120 n. 70.

<sup>196</sup> Most (1989).

<sup>197</sup> Cf. Austin (1983) 3 on the satyric and grotesque buffoonery of the scene and its incommensurability with the tone of the rest of the *Odyssey*. The conflict between Polyphemus and Odysseus emerges as early as Book 1 (*Od.* 1.68-71) and Book 2 (*Od.* 2.17-20), and also at *Od.* 10.201, 10.434, 11.100-103, 13.341, 12.211, 20.17, and 23.310. See Vidal-Naquet (1996) 37 on the narrative contrast between the 'real' and 'mythical' worlds in the *Odyssey*. See

attempts to harm one another, Odysseus and Polyphemus echo each other's behaviours and, in the process, display more resemblances than they do disparities. The resemblances between Odysseus and Polyphemus appear in Book 9 and throughout the *Odyssey*: their attempts at trickery, their extensive acts of violence, their affection for a particular animal, and their shared predicament of having their homes and stores raided by unwelcome men<sup>198</sup> – all of these situate Odysseus and Polyphemus as metaphysical doppelgangers of one another.<sup>199</sup>

The isolated, Poseidon-born Cyclops<sup>200</sup> is mentioned as early as line 68 of Book 1, as a means of explaining Poseidon's antipathy toward Odysseus:

ἀλλὰ Ποσειδάων γαιήοχος ἀσκελὲς αἰὲν  
Κύκλωπος κεχόλωται, ὃν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν,  
ἀντίθεον Πολύφημον, ὅου κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον  
πᾶσιν Κυκλώπεσσι· Θόωσα δέ μιν τέκε νύμφη,  
Φόρκυνος θυγάτηρ, ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο μέδοντος,  
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι Ποσειδάωνι μιγεῖσα.  
ἐκ τοῦ δὴ Ὀδυσῆα Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων  
οὔ τι κατακτείνει, πλάζει δ' ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης. (*Od.* 1. 68-75)

This account of Poseidon's wrath towards Odysseus, which demonstrates the monster's centrality to the drama of the epic, appears within the gods' discussion regarding the human and divine

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also Reinhardt (1996) 69 on the mirror between the 'realistic' encounter with Cicones and the 'fairy-tale' encounter with the Cyclops.

<sup>198</sup> Newton (1983) offers a very persuasive account of the *Odyssey*'s 'emotional ambivalence' with regard to the depiction of the relationship between Odysseus and Polyphemus. He argues that the narrator of the *Odyssey* manages to muddle sympathies for Polyphemus with reverence for Odysseus, and vice versa.

<sup>199</sup> See Newton (1983) 142 on Odysseus as a 'metaphorical Cyclops' in Book 17 of the *Odyssey* and Segal (1992) 506 on how Odysseus' hatred and anger on Polyphemus' island causes him to temporarily resemble the Cyclops. Cf. Baldick (1990) 50 on Dr. Frankenstein and his monster as doppelgangers.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Mondì (1983) 28 on the problems of Polyphemus' parentage: 'The question of how, if at all, Polyphemus is supposed to be related to the other Cyclopes within the context of the *Odyssey* – and whether they also are to be thought of as the sons of Poseidon – is a question which apparently did not enter the poet's head, and consequently has no answer. It is Euripides (*Cyc.* 20) who first extends the paternity of Poseidon explicitly to all the Cyclopes.' Segal (1992) 497 notes that Poseidon may be the father of Polyphemus but not necessarily all Cyclopes, and this parentage places Poseidon within 'an older world order.' See Graziosi and Haubold (2003) for the problem of masculine isolation and the social implications of heroic animality throughout Homeric epic.

complicity in the suffering of mortals.<sup>201</sup> As early as Book 1, and in this discussion concerning the agency of humans with regard their own fates, it becomes clear from Odysseus' and Polyphemus' descriptions as *antitheos* (ἀντιθέω Ὀδυσῆϊ, *Od.* 1.21; ἀντίθειον Πολύφημον, *Od.* 1.70) that monsters can share formulaic qualities with both gods and heroes.<sup>202</sup>

This description amplifies the ambiguity of the gods' discussion about mortal agency by aligning the monster and the hero in the same adjectival category. Though the adjective ἀντίθεος is not uncommon in epic,<sup>203</sup> it is significant that the hero and his monstrous enemy already share a verbal description from the *Odyssey's* very beginning. These opposing figures thereby occupy the same referential 'index.'<sup>204</sup> The linguistic landscape prepares the audience's ears for echoes between the monster and hero and imbues them both with a strain of semi-divinity.<sup>205</sup> Again, Odysseus is described as godlike (Ὀδυσῆος... θεϊοιο, 1.65) by Zeus himself. Far before the epic delivers the account of Odysseus' arrival at Polyphemus' cave, the audience is prepared to meet two figures that occupy a shared metaphysical space that lies beyond typical mortality.

Book 9, where the actual encounter between Odysseus and Polyphemus takes place, is narrated by Odysseus to his Phaeacian hosts. The Phaeacians function as a Cyclopean foil on the issue of hospitality toward strangers:<sup>206</sup> where Nausicaa and Alcinous warmly and lavishly welcome Odysseus into their home, Polyphemus does the opposite, acting viciously and aggressively toward

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<sup>201</sup> On the presence (and suppression) of Polyphemus in the beginning of the *Odyssey*, see Strauss Clay (1976) 317 and passim. Cf. Brown (1996) 8. On the resonance of the Polyphemus episode throughout the epic, see Reinhardt (1996) 83.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Goldhill (1991) 7 n.12 on how Polyphemus and Athena treat Odysseus in similar ways (as a foolish child) and also both unearth his linguistic *mētis*. See Clare (1998) for discussion of Odysseus' frequent reminiscences of his encounter with Polyphemus.

<sup>203</sup> On the frequency of epithets that denote likeness to the gods, see Griffin (1980) 82.

<sup>204</sup> Foley (1999) 18. See Clare (1998) for a discussion of Zeus' characterisation of both monster and hero as 'commensurate', in that they are both distinguished from their peers for their superiority (for Odysseus, his cleverness, and for Polyphemus, his strength).

<sup>205</sup> See Griffin (1980) 81-102 on the varied inflections and effects of divine epithets attached to heroes.

<sup>206</sup> Most (1989) 25: 'The explanation for the arrangement of Odysseus' adventures is obvious: they confront him with the two extreme versions of bad hospitality, exaggerated to nightmarish proportions and repeated with hallucinatory obsessiveness.'

the hero and his crew (*Od.* 9.187-542). In Odysseus' account of his meeting with Polyphemus (and also in his other descriptions of monstrous encounters), Odysseus reveals himself to be a very careful and strategic storyteller.<sup>207</sup> After mentioning Calypso, Circe, and the Lotus-Eaters, Odysseus describes his arrival at the land of the Cyclopes:<sup>208</sup>

Ἔνθεν δὲ προτέρω πλέομεν ἀκαχήμενοι ἦτορ.  
Κυκλώπων δ' ἐς γαῖαν ὑπερφιάλων ἀθεμίστων  
ἰκόμεθ', οἳ ῥα θεοῖσι πεποιθότες ἀθανάτοισιν  
οὔτε φυτεύουσιν χερσὶν φυτὸν οὔτ' ἀρόωσιν,  
ἀλλὰ τὰ γ' ἄσπαρτα καὶ ἀνήροτα πάντα φύονται,  
πυροὶ καὶ κριθαὶ ἠδ' ἄμπελοι, αἳ τε φέρουσιν  
οἶνον ἐριστάφυλον, καὶ σφιν Διὸς ὄμβρος ἀέξει.  
τοῖσιν δ' οὔτ' ἀγοραὶ βουλευφόροι οὔτε θέμιστες,  
ἀλλ' οἳ γ' ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων ναίουσι κάρηνα  
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι, θεμιστεύει δὲ ἕκαστος  
παίδων ἠδ' ἀλόχων, οὐδ' ἀλλήλων ἀλέγουσι. (*Od.* 9.105-115)

Odysseus characterises the Cyclopes as an a-civilised group of giants lacking in governmental, economic, religious, or social structures.<sup>209</sup> Further isolated from the Cyclopes is Polyphemus, who lives alone.<sup>210</sup> Odysseus describes him as both a monster and a man:

ἔνθα δ' ἀνήρ ἐνίαυε πελώριος, ὅς ῥα τε μῆλα  
οἶος ποιμαίνεσκεν ἀπόπροθεν· οὐδὲ μετ' ἄλλους  
πωλεῖτ', ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἐὼν ἀθεμίστια ἦδη.  
καὶ γὰρ θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἐφκει  
ἀνδρὶ γε σιτοφάγῳ, ἀλλὰ ρίψ ὑλήεντι  
ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων, ὃ τε φαίνεται οἶον ἀπ' ἄλλων. (*Od.* 9.187-92)

<sup>207</sup> See Clare (1998) for Odysseus' version of events as compared with other interpretations enabled by the *Odyssey*.

<sup>208</sup> See Reinhardt (1996) 78 on Odysseus' colonialist description of the Cyclopes' land and Dougherty (2001) 129, n. 28 on Book 9 as a 'mini-colonial book.' See also Clare (1998) 7 on the depiction of the Cyclopes as a strategic 'exercise in self-justification.'

<sup>209</sup> Mondy (1983) 25 notes that the Cyclopes are strategically described to generate contrast with the characteristics of the Phaeacians; see *ibid.*, 27-28. See also Butterworth (1987) and Brown (1996) 19. Cf. Segal (1992) 495-97 on the primordial primitivism associated with the Cyclopes. Cf. Vidal-Naquet (1996) 42 on the *Iliad*'s familiarity with the 'good Cyclopes, the *abioi*.' On the plurality of postcolonial responses to the *Odyssey*, see McConnell (2013); and for Polyphemus specifically, see *ibid.*, 6-16. For the argument against the conflation of Polyphemus with nature and Odysseus with culture, see Austin (1975) 156, Brown (1996) 18 and O'Sullivan (1990) 7-17. Cf. Reinhardt (1996) 82 who describes the encounter as 'a battle between civilisation teamed up with intelligence, and barbarity allied with raw strength.' Cf. also De Jong (1992) 2, who attributes this binary to Odysseus' subjective style of narration. Austin (1983) 20 argues, however, that the Cyclopes 'give no evidence of being bestial', and that they 'are close to being noble savages, whereas Polyphemus is just savage. See also Vidal-Naquet (1996) 41 on the similarities between the Cyclopes' land and Hesiod's golden age.

<sup>210</sup> See Austin (1983) 19 on the mitosis of Polyphemus and the Cyclopes as compared with Silenus and satyrs.

Both the diction and the structure of the phrases emphasise the vastness of this creature: ἀνήρ... πελώριος encircle the verb and lie at the centre of line 187, and θαῦμα'... πελώριον gives the same verbal arrangement in line 190.<sup>211</sup> These expressions stretch the Cyclops linguistically across his verbal actions of ἐνίαυε (denoting living or sleeping among) and ἐτέτυκτο (being created, made, or wrought), but these words also convey the fact that he is both a man, ἀνήρ, and a marvel, θαῦμα, emphasised by the visual comparison to a mountain (ἀλλὰ ρίω ὑλήεντι | ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων).<sup>212</sup>

Although Odysseus omits any mention of Polyphemos' monophthalmic visage,<sup>213</sup> the magnitude and wonder that characterises his description of Polyphemos' isle bolsters the Cyclops' particular brand of nonhumanity. Furthermore, the emphasis on Polyphemos as a *thauma* anticipates the visual dimension which characterises the climax of this episode. Odysseus has already established vision as a central theme for this encounter, when he says that his crew could not see anything upon arrival at the Cyclops' land, so they must have been guided by a god.<sup>214</sup> Odysseus' visual appetite to see the monster, and to see if the yet-unknown Polyphemos will offer guest-gifts to their crew, emerges from an active impulse to *experience* the monster, or witness him through a range of senses.<sup>215</sup> When Odysseus' comrades urge him to take the food from the Cyclops and then immediately run, Odysseus' curiosity get the better of him:

ἀλλ' ἐγὼ οὐ πιθόμην, ἧ τ' ἄν πολὺ κέρδιον ἦεν,  
 ὄφρ' αὐτόν τε ἴδοιμι, καὶ εἴ μοι ξείνια δοίη.  
 οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλ' ἐτάροισι φανεῖς ἐρατεινὸς ἔσεσθαι. (*Od.* 9.228-30)

<sup>211</sup> See Neils (1995) on iconographic representations of the Cyclops (and the other monsters of *Od.* 9-12).

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Clare (1998) 11, who argues that the emphasis is on Polyphemos' difference in behaviour rather than in appearance. It is true that his single eye is left without comment, but Odysseus certainly emphasises the visual impact of Polyphemos.

<sup>213</sup> Mondy (1983); Heubeck and Hoesktra (1989) ad 9.106-115; West (1988) ad 1.69.

<sup>214</sup> *Od.* 9.142-143.

<sup>215</sup> See Reinhardt (1996) 79-80 for the reading that this episode is the encounter in which Odysseus finds himself most strongly attracted to danger and for the argument that this active desire to experience danger diminishes by the time he meets Circe. See also Finley (1978) 100, who links Odysseus' curiosity about the monster to his acquisitiveness.

This moment anticipates elements of Odysseus' encounter with the Sirens and with Scylla in Book 12, where Odysseus' auditory curiosity leads him to hear the deadly Sirens' song.<sup>216</sup> Similarly, his eagerness to assert his heroism leads him to stand on the foredeck of the ship to look out for Scylla, against Circe's advice.<sup>217</sup> Odysseus' encounters with monsters are not always necessary: on the contrary, the hero demonstrates that he wishes to encounter the monster and experience its phenomenological impact, even when contact can be avoided. Part of his heroism, and part of what sets him apart from other mortals, is his intent desire to mingle with the monster and experience it through his senses.<sup>218</sup>

At the start of the encounter between the hero and the Cyclops, Polyphemus speaks first, asking Odysseus and his companions to identify themselves. Odysseus appeals to Polyphemus on the grounds of Zeus' laws of hospitality. The Cyclops scoffs at Odysseus' appeal, claiming that the Cyclopes do not worship the gods, and that they are in fact superior to the gods.<sup>219</sup> It is significant how different the Cyclops appears from Odysseus at this moment, since the hero's epic course is quite often dictated, guided, and informed by the will of the gods.<sup>220</sup> Yet, even when Odysseus and Polyphemus seem most different from one another in this regard, their likeness emerges. Polyphemus leads the gambit by trying to trick Odysseus into revealing where his ship is. Polyphemus thus plays Odysseus' favourite game of cleverness and deception in an unsuccessful

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<sup>216</sup> *Od.* 12.153-200.

<sup>217</sup> On the problems of Odysseus' 'forgetting' Circe's advice, see Hopman (2012) 43; Reinhardt (1996) 74-75; Heubeck ad *Od.* 12.226-235. Perhaps a lingering effect of the Sirens' song, which temporarily causes Odysseus to forget his *nostos*, is responsible for this moment of amnesia? On Odysseus' failed heroism in this moment, see Segal (1983) 27.

<sup>218</sup> See Austin (1983) 14-16 on how the Cyclops episode stands out from Odysseus' other encounters by virtue of its lack of necessity. See also Graham (1995) 11. Cf. Brown (1996) 23-25 on Odysseus' interest in interacting with the Cyclops and acquiring gifts from him not as a 'a failing, but a reflection of the preoccupations of the aristocratic class to which he belongs.'

<sup>219</sup> *Od.* 9.275-276.

<sup>220</sup> See Glenn (1972) for bibliography and discussion on the description of the Cyclopes as trusting in the gods at *Od.* 9.107 in the context of the later impiety from Polyphemus.

attempt at *mētis*. When Polyphemus' trick fails to deceive Odysseus, the Cyclops resorts to his monstrous size, appetite, and ferocity to display dominance over the hero. The verbal trick fails the monster, so Polyphemus communicates through violence, and thereby demonstrates his ability to reduce men to helpless puppies:

Ὡς ἐφάμην, ὁ δὲ μ' οὐδὲν ἀμείβετο νηλεῖ θυμῷ,  
ἀλλ' ὃ γ' ἀναΐξας ἐτάροις ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἴαλλε,  
σὺν δὲ δύο μάρψας ὥς τε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ  
κόπτ'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δευε δὲ γαῖαν.  
τοὺς δὲ διὰ μελεῖστί ταμῶν ὀπλίσσατο δόρπον·  
ἦσθιε δ' ὥς τε λέων ὀρεσίτροφος, οὐδ' ἀπέλειπεν,  
ἔγκατά τε σάρκας τε καὶ ὀστέα μυελόνετα.  
ἡμεῖς δὲ κλαίοντες ἀνεσχέθομεν Διὶ χεῖρας,  
σχέτλια ἔργ' ὀρόωντες, ἀμηχανίη δ' ἔχε θυμόν.  
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ Κύκλωψ μεγάλην ἐμπλήσατο νηδὺν  
ἀνδρόμεα κρέ' ἔδων καὶ ἐπ' ἄκρητον γάλα πίνων,  
κεῖτ' ἔντοσθ' ἄντροιο τανυσσάμενος διὰ μήλων. (*Od.* 9.287-298)

Instead of speaking, Polyphemus here uses his bodily gesture of eating Odysseus' comrades in order to communicate his power, as well as their own precarious status as humans. Polyphemus's gesture indicates that humans can easily be demoted to (or exposed as) animals – and worse, to mere puppies – in the face of his monstrous might.<sup>221</sup>

This scene reveals that the monster is not only a threat to the lives of individual human victims: the monster is something that can call into question the specialness of humanity and potentially subvert it into something else. At this moment, helplessness pervades the human spirit. Polyphemus' own existential blending of categories of monster, human, and animal becomes materialised in the abject secretions of the Cyclops, as he later drunkenly vomits a solution that contains, in equal parts, wine, human, and his own monstrous bile:

“Ἡ καὶ ἀνακλινθεὶς πέσεν ὕπτιος, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα  
κεῖτ' ἀποδοχμώσας παχὺν ἀυχένα, κὰδ δὲ μιν ὕπνος  
ἦρει πανδαμάτωρ· φάρυγος δ' ἐξέσσυτο οἴνος

<sup>221</sup> See Vidal-Naquet (1996) 34 on how *dikē* separates men from animals in Homer.

ψωμοί τ' ἀνδρόμεοι· ὁ δ' ἐρεύγετο οἰνοβαρείων. (*Od.* 9.371-374)

Odysseus, however, is too clever and heroic to let himself become a puppy. Instead of allowing the monster to reduce him to animal status, Odysseus behaves in some ways *like* the monster, using technological thinking in order to turn Polyphemos' own mechanisms of violence against him:

ἦδε δέ μοι κατὰ θυμὸν ἀρίστη φαίνεται βουλή.  
Κύκλωπος γὰρ ἔκειτο μέγα ρόπαλον παρὰ σηκῶ,  
χλωρὸν ἐλαΐνεον· τὸ μὲν ἔκταμεν, ὄφρα φοροίη  
αὐανθέν. τὸ μὲν ἄμμες εἴσκομεν εἰσορόωντες  
ὄσσον θ' ἰστὸν νηὸς ἐεικοσόροιο μελαίνης,  
φορτίδος εὐρείης, ἢ τ' ἐκπεράα μέγα λαῖτμα·  
τόσσον ἔην μῆκος, τόσσον πάχος εἰσοράασθαι.  
τοῦ μὲν ὄσον τ' ὄργυιαν ἐγὼν ἀπέκοψα παραστάς  
καὶ παρέθηχ' ἐτάροισιν, ἀποξῦναι δ' ἐκέλευσα·  
οἱ δ' ὀμαλὸν ποίησαν· ἐγὼ δ' ἐθόωσα παραστάς  
ἄκρον, ἄφαρ δὲ λαβῶν ἐπυράκτεον ἐν πυρὶ κηλέῳ. (*Od.* 9.318-328)

Odysseus thus transforms the monster's weapon into the hero's weapon. In this act, he demonstrates, firstly, how heroes are different from ordinary mortals: they do not allow themselves to become reduced to animals, but instead augment their humanity with traces of monstrosity. Secondly, Odysseus' use of Polyphemos' weapon reveals how unstable the borders are between monster and hero.<sup>222</sup> Thus far the monster and the hero have both attempted to use the same rhetorical weapon of trickery and now the same physical weapon of the club, albeit in different forms. The parallelism is all the time enforced by the emphasis on sight and lack of sight for both the monster and the hero throughout this entire encounter.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Hutchinson (2007) 24 points out that there must be some existential resemblance between the hero and the monster in order to give the violation of hospitality a vivid effect. Cf. Heubeck and Hoesktra (1989) ad *Od.* 9.106-115, who argue that Polyphemos is in fact 'more beast than man.'

<sup>223</sup> Odysseus tells the Phaeacians that a god must have guided his crew to the shore, because the dark and murky sky blocked their vision from landing their ship on the shore of their own doing, 9.142-148); the blinding of Polyphemos (9.394-402); Polyphemos' inability to detect Odysseus, hiding beneath the ram to whom he speaks (9.447-460). See Reinhardt (1996) 77 on the landscape in this arrival scene. See De Jong (1992) 6, on the discourse of folly and blindness ad 9.44 and *passim*. Cf. Hutchinson (2007) 28 on the motif of sight in *Theoc.* *Id.* 11.

The irony does not stop at the appropriation of the Cyclops' club: Odysseus transforms the error in Polyphemus' voice into a weapon against him, too, when Polyphemus calls out to the other Cyclopes for help.<sup>224</sup> The monster has been tricked by the hero, who claims his name is 'Outis' ('Nobody')<sup>225</sup> – and when Polyphemus cries out for help, he mistakenly identifies Odysseus as 'Outis.' This results in his inability to communicate his plight to the other Cyclopes, despite his use of language and their seeming willingness to help.<sup>226</sup> As Bergren notes, 'It is the speech of Polyphemus that turns against Polyphemus.'<sup>227</sup> This antisocial insularity of Polyphemus, which initially makes him so monstrous, becomes a weapon used against him. It is furthermore unwittingly articulated by the response of the other Cyclopes, shouting from outside the cave:

“εἰ μὲν δὴ μή τις σε βιάζεται οἷον ἔοντα,  
νοῦσον γ' οὐ πως ἔστι Διὸς μεγάλου ἀλέασθαι,  
ἀλλὰ σύ γ' εὔχεο πατρὶ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι.” (*Od.* 9.410-412)

Thus the hero uses Polyphemus' own monstrous traits – brutal violence, his club, the error of 'Outis' in his booming voice, his isolation – against him in order to defeat him. But as much as the hero imitates the monster, the monster too engages in the practice of mimicry of his opponent, both behaviourally and existentially.<sup>228</sup>

It has been widely argued that Polyphemus takes on an anthropomorphic disposition when Odysseus overhears him speaking to his favourite ram. Scholars have indicated that Polyphemus' monologue induces in the reader a certain kind of sympathy for the monster,<sup>229</sup> a sympathy which is often complicated by the Cyclops' impulse toward violence:

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<sup>224</sup> *Od.* 9.398-402. See Silk (2004) 33 on wordplay in the *Odyssey* and Athena's own role as 'poetic-creative exemplar.'

<sup>225</sup> See Goldhill (1991) 24-36 on Odysseus' verbal disguises throughout the *Odyssey*, and 25 n. 45 for bibliography on the epic's use of names. See also Bergren (1983) 45-54 on the narratology and anachronies in this encounter.

<sup>226</sup> Bergren (1983) 47-48 notes that Odysseus' defeat of the Cyclops depends primarily on the hero's ability to turn 'logos into dolos.'

<sup>227</sup> Bergren (1983) 48.

<sup>228</sup> Segal (1992) 506 describes their 'resemblances' when afflicted by anger in particular.

<sup>229</sup> Hutchinson (2007) n.1 gives bibliography on the structure and effect of Polyphemus' speech.

‘Κριὲ πέπον, τί μοι ὦδε διὰ σπέος ἔσσο μίλων  
 ὕστατος; οὐ τι πάρος γε λελειμμένος ἔρχεται οἰῶν,  
 ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρῶτος νέμειαι τέρεν’ ἄνθεα ποίης  
 μακρὰ βιβιάς, πρῶτος δὲ ῥοὰς ποταμῶν ἀφικάνεις,  
 πρῶτος δὲ σταθμόνδε λιλαίειαι ἀπονέεσθαι  
 ἐσπέριος· νῦν αὖτε πανύστατος, ἧ σύ ἄνακτος  
 ὀφθαλμὸν ποθέεις, τὸν ἀνήρ κακὸς ἐξάλαωσε  
 σὺν λυγροῖς ἐτάροισι, δαμασσάμενος φρένα οἴνω,  
 Οὔτις, ὃν οὐ πῶ φημι πεφυγμένον ἔμμεν ὄλεθρον.  
 εἰ δὴ ὁμοφρονέοις ποτιφωνήεις τε γένοιο  
 εἰπεῖν ὅππῃ κείνος ἐμὸν μένος ἠλασκάζει·  
 τῶ κέ οἱ ἐγκέφαλός γε διὰ σπέος ἄλλυδις ἄλλη  
 θεινομένου ῥαίοιτο πρὸς οὔδει, κὰδ δέ κ’ ἐμὸν κῆρ  
 λωφήσειε κακῶν, τά μοι οὐτιδανὸς πόρεν Οὔτις.’ (*Od.* 9.447-460)

Polyphemus wishes his favourite animal could talk and therefore yearns for a kind of society with the animals. This in turn calls into question the nature of the repeated emphasis on Polyphemus’ social isolation – a solitude to which *Outis*, nobody, becomes a haunting refrain. Gregory Hutchinson suggests that the primary means by which a sense of sympathy for the monster is developed in this episode occurs through this monologue and its narratological complexity.

Polyphemus’ speech indeed offers rare access to the monstrous voice. The Cyclops’ monologue exists as one of the only ‘overheard’ monstrous voices in Homer,<sup>230</sup> and also the only speech-making done by a monster which is directed to someone who is not a hero, and not delivered in an antagonistic rhetoric. As Odysseus presents it, Polyphemus’ monologue delivers the monster’s voice in its natural state, offering a complex simultaneity of sympathy and ridicule toward the monster.<sup>231</sup> Of course, this rare instance of monstrous voice is mediated by Odysseus’

<sup>230</sup> Cf. Circe, a nonhuman, overheard singing sweetly in her palace, *Od.* 10.221. Reinhardt (1996) 96 explores the question of for whom the solitary Calypso sings, and also argues that ‘[t]he song of Circe cannot be separated from her magic.’

<sup>231</sup> In the literary tradition of the Gothic novel, Baldick (1990) 45 characterises the endowment of an articulate voice to Frankenstein’s monster as ‘Mary Shelley’s most important subversion of the category of monstrosity’ and argues that the monster’s ‘visibility means nothing and his eloquence means everything for his identity.’ Homer depicts monsters whose voices – whether eloquent or not – are central aspects in the characterisation of the monster and its level of subjectivity. Indeed, Baldick is correct that the ‘traditional idea of the monstrous was strongly associated with visual display’ and that monsters ‘were to be seen and not heard’, but this tradition breaks from Homer, whose monsters are consistently sonically expressive.

ventriloquism of the monster. Through the monologue here as well as in the other monstrous encounters, Odysseus takes on a Cyclopean likeness, as he performs Polyphemus' voice and identity in a monstrous first person discourse for his Phaeacian audience. Hutchinson describes this as a moment that generates condescending sympathy for the Cyclops on the part of Odysseus' audience:

His feeling for the ram displays more sensibility than we expected—almost the sensibility of the primary narrator in a simile... Precisely the actual absence of anyone to feel sorry for the Cyclops creates pity in the primary listener. The solitude of the Cyclops is contrasted, by the speech and its situation, with Odysseus' teamwork: the feeble man has blinded him *σὸν λυγροῖς ἐτάροισι* (454).<sup>232</sup>

The sympathy is never uncomplicated, for the monologue emerges out of an impulse for an animal interlocutor, and at the same time, out of an impulse toward violence and revenge.

This dual endowment of pathos and violence makes Polyphemus a particularly resonant double of Odysseus, and also makes him a monster with an unusually complex interiority. He displays a high degree of general malice toward humankind – based either on a disregard for divine order and law, or on an understandable rage upon finding his home and food stores pillaged by strangers. Polyphemus communicates this rage vividly in the gruesome manner in which he attacks and eats Odysseus' men.<sup>233</sup> The Cyclops' malevolence is slightly tempered by the fact that the narrative broadcasts the voice of the monster and therefore allows an ambiguous level of sympathy. His monstrosity is also complicated by the parallelism between Polyphemus' experience in Book 9 and Odysseus' own return to Ithaca in Book 22.<sup>234</sup> Just as Odysseus reacts with extreme violence

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<sup>232</sup> Hutchinson (2007) 24. Hutchinson complicates the sympathy by suggesting that Polyphemus generates a 'sad illusion' of mutual understanding between himself and the ram. Cf. Pelliccia (1995) 103, who relates this speech to broader issues of animal consciousness and 'awareness of language-incompetence as a defining characteristic of animals.'

<sup>233</sup> *Od.* 9.287-295.

<sup>234</sup> Newton (1983) 141 addresses the question of why Homer enlists sympathy for the monster, and also compares Odysseus' relationship with Argus to Polyphemus' relationship with the favourite ram. See McConnell (2013) 26; Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) 11; and Brown (1996) 29 on the similarities between the fate of Odysseus' men

upon finding his home invaded by feasting suitors, so too does Polyphemus.

The degree of humanity in Polyphemus is complemented by the degree of monstrosity in Odysseus. Odysseus, clinging to the body of Polyphemus' ram as he makes his escape from the cave, temporarily takes on monstrous form, moving as a half-ram, half-man hybrid. This image again reinforces the hero's teamwork in contrast to Polyphemus' solitude: Odysseus collaborates with the animals with which Polyphemus imagines a camaraderie. This in turn emphasises Polyphemus' isolation from the very animal to which he speaks. Furthermore, in attaching himself to the body of the ram, Odysseus temporarily takes on a hybrid body and thereby behaves like a 'monster in drag' in order to circumvent the monster. It is perhaps due to this hyper-iteration of monstrosity, both on the part of the Cyclops and the hero Odysseus himself, that the entire episode takes on its monstrous magnitude, occupying the largest number of lines (9.105-566) of any monstrous encounter in the *apologoi*. The vastness of the Cyclops, his club, and his violence are all matched in the brutality of Odysseus as well as the soundscape, as Norman Austin writes:

Even sounds are monstrous: the clatter of the giant's firewood on the floor of the cave; the giant's bellowing; the cave and mountain bellowing in echo of the giant's pain; the screaming of the heated wood plunged into the aqueous humors of the giant's eye.<sup>235</sup>

Indeed, Odysseus' account of the blinding of the Cyclops includes an extreme level of detail and amplification. He specifies that the very roots, ῥίζαι, of Polyphemus' eye crackle from the heat and the thrust of the stake.<sup>236</sup> The burning eye hisses like a hot rod when it is placed in cold water.

Polyphemus' roar is magnified by its echoes through the cave:

ὥς δ' ὅτ' ἀνήρ χαλκεὺς πέλεκυν μέγαν ἠὲ σκέπαρνον  
εἰν ὕδατι ψυχρῷ βάπτῃ μεγάλα ἰάχοντα  
φαρμάσσω· τὸ γὰρ αὐτε σιδήρου γε κράτος ἐστίν·  
ὥς τοῦ σίζ' ὀφθαλμὸς ἐλαϊνέω περὶ μοχλῶ.

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during the *apologoi* and the suitors in Book 22. Cf. also the connection between Odysseus' encounter with the Cyclops and Menelaus' encounter with Proteus (where the men hide under the bodies of seals, *Od.* 4.365ff.).

<sup>235</sup> Austin (1983) 6.

<sup>236</sup> *Od.* 9.389-390.

σμερδαλέον δὲ μέγ' ὄμωξεν, περὶ δ' ἴαχε πέτρῃ,  
ἡμεῖς δὲ δείσαντες ἀπεσσύμεθ'. (Od. 9.391-396)

Graphically wounded, Polyphemus then calls out to his fellow Cyclopes for help, only to find that his voice fails him too. Odysseus places blindness in the eye of Polyphemus, and through trickery, places metaphorical muteness in his mouth: Polyphemus fails to communicate with the neighbouring Cyclopes and therefore fails to hold Odysseus accountable for his violence.

The non-semiotic monstrous sounds of hissing metal, burning roots, and roaring Cyclops close this episode – which receives a final punctuation from Odysseus' assertion of his name to the Cyclops – and together these sounds signal Odysseus' triumph over the monster. But as his adventures continue, the overall sonic tone of the encounters shift from linguistic punning and cunning into magic, music, and noise – realms where Odysseus' control of language and voice begins to recede.

### Circe

The next monstrous encounter wherein the heroic mingles with the monstrous takes place at the palace of Circe in Book 10 of the *Odyssey*. This arrival occurs after a series of events, wherein Odysseus' crew sails away from Polyphemus' isle, and Odysseus makes his famous self-declaration to the Cyclops: this final Odyssean gesture of voice in Book 9 that solidifies his *kleos* and also Polyphemus' curse against him. Odysseus' crew next encounter Aeolus and the bag of winds, followed by the anthropophagous Laestrygonians, who share obvious parallels with the Cyclopes for their cannibalism and their likeness to mountains.<sup>237</sup> And like Polyphemus, these Laestrygonians menacingly throw stones at Odysseus' crew: an act of violence which results in a

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<sup>237</sup> Polyphemus is likened to a wooded cluster of tall mountains, *Od.* 9.191-92. The Laestrygonian queen is described as the size of a mountain peak, *Od.* 10.112-113.

horrifying soundscape composed of the cries of wounded men and the din of rocks crashing against the ship.<sup>238</sup>

When Odysseus' men arrive at Circe's stone palace in the forest glades, they find it surrounded by wolves and lions, which have metamorphosed from their original human forms as victims of Circe's witchcraft.<sup>239</sup> The group of Odysseus' crew who enter her palace and eat there find themselves bewitched by drugs and transformed into pigs in every aspect except for their intellect: these members of Odysseus' crew retain their human minds, and as such they become human-animal hybrids. Their animality is complemented by the monstrosity evoked by these beasts. This monstrosity is manifest largely in how the animals instigate terror in Odysseus' crew who come upon them: τοὶ δ' ἔδεισαν, ἐπεὶ ἴδον αἰνὰ πέλωρα (*Od.* 9.219). They are physically wolves and lions, but mentally human, and their two-legged stances and fawning behaviour provoke unease and fear in Odysseus' men (*Od.* 10.214-219).<sup>240</sup> Eurylochus, suspecting some kind of deception, stays behind the others (*Od.* 10.232-233) and explains the men's metamorphosis to Odysseus (*Od.* 10.251-260), who did not witness it himself.

Hermes appears in the form of an attractive youth (*Od.* 10.277-279) and presents Odysseus with guidance and a drug. Upon ingestion, the drug *moly* counteracts the potency of Circe's drugs and prevents them from taking effect on Odysseus (*Od.* 10.281-301). Hermes announces that, with the help of divine pharmacology, Odysseus may then dine with the dread goddess, retain his human form despite Circe's potions, and, taking her by surprise, lunge upon her with his sword.<sup>241</sup> Hermes also instructs that Odysseus must then accept Circe's offer to go to bed with her. Odysseus follows

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<sup>238</sup> *Od.* 10.121-124.

<sup>239</sup> See Brilliant (1995) 169 on Circe's social ties to other witches. See Goldhill (1991) 12 on the theme of the 'animal-guarded threshold.'

<sup>240</sup> On the threat to human identity, see Parry (1992) 116.

<sup>241</sup> On Odysseus' sword as 'the male counterpart to Kirke's magical wand', see Brilliant (1995) 167.

Hermes' advice, and this action results in the most pronounced mingling of the hero and the nonhuman – a sexual encounter. The corporeal, rather than existential, mingling between hero and nonhuman antagonist in turn results in a translation of the antagonistic witch into the numinous, knowledgeable, and generous helper that she becomes for Odysseus and his men.<sup>242</sup>

It is through Odysseus' contact with the nonhuman – that is, the assistance of Hermes – that this process is enabled. It is Hermes who endows Odysseus with the *moly* that counteracts Circe's own pharmacological violence, and also with the guidance to ensure his success. Here Odysseus behaves like the witch-goddess, insofar as he uses her own technology – divine pharmacology – to circumvent her violence and transform it into productive benevolence. John Gould describes the general phenomenon of human communication with divinity as something that requires the human being to reach beyond normality: '[W]hat is given symbolic expression is the notion that contact and communication with divinity may be contact with the alien and subversive and may involve, not the maintenance, but the subversion of social normality.'<sup>243</sup> This is indeed the case in Odysseus' divinely-inspired negotiations with Circe. Once Hermes enables Odysseus' immunity to Circe's witchcraft against him, she then fears him, and he in turn exudes the experiential effect of the monstrous toward her. Thus the two undergo a complete 'subversion of social normality' in terms of human and divine encounters.

Odysseus' encounter with Circe thereafter allows the hero to even further develop his practice of mingling with the monstrous, because it is Circe who instructs him in how to navigate the monsters, shades, and other dangers that await him after he leaves her isle. Thus Odysseus' use of Circean magic takes on a second resonance, insofar as the witch who transforms men by giving

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<sup>242</sup> Reinhardt (1996) 94; Austin (1975) 157; Page (1973a) 52; Germain (1954) 249-272. Cf. Segal (1968) 419 on her consistently remote, divine character. See Doherty (1995) 137 on the gendered dimensions of Circe's guidance to Odysseus.

<sup>243</sup> Gould (1985) 22.

them enchanted herbs is herself transformed when Odysseus gives himself an enchanted herb. A magical voice once associated with music, spells, and enchantment is metamorphosed into a voice that prepares the hero to meet and survive several female monsters at sea. Circe's voice – which bears 'the power both to brutalize and to sing'<sup>244</sup> – in turn facilitates Odysseus' ability to meet and manage the nonhuman, feminine voices of the sea.<sup>245</sup>

### The Sirens

Of all the mellifluous, nonhuman voices that resound through ancient Greek myth, the Sirenic voice presents the most developed portrait of the matrix of temptation, interiority, and fatality that accompanies the allure of music. Indeed, the Sirens' song operates in a manner that paradoxically caters to and precludes the possibility of satisfaction of the hero's desires. Their voices offer to their audience a melodious rendition of the listeners' deepest longing, translated into song; and in the case of Odysseus, that longing is for the realisation of his own *kleos*. The inevitable fatality for the listener, however, prevents the Sirens from safely being heard.

The Sirens first appear in the narrative of the *Odyssey* in the form of Circe's forewarning to Odysseus. She describes their whereabouts, their song, and the perils summoned by their deadly voices.<sup>246</sup> Odysseus himself gives a second and third description of the Sirens. In the first, he offers a warning to his comrades of the oncoming danger. In the second, he describes the actual encounter.<sup>247</sup> Despite the three separate descriptions of the Sirens, the *Odyssey*'s portrayal of these beings offers as many ambiguities as it does clarifications about the nature of the Sirens.<sup>248</sup> First

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<sup>244</sup> Segal (1968) 425.

<sup>245</sup> See Murnaghan (1995) 65 on Circe's preparation of Odysseus and passim on the broader designs of Athena throughout the *Odyssey*.

<sup>246</sup> *Od.* 12.39-54.

<sup>247</sup> *Od.* 12.158-164; *Od.* 12.166-200.

<sup>248</sup> Van Liefferinge (2012) 480.

of all, Odysseus' Phaeacian audience and Homer's audience only receive access to the story of the Sirens before and after the encounter with these monsters rather than an account given in 'real time.' We hear the warning about the Sirens from Circe and Odysseus, and then, far later, Odysseus delivers all this narration in the form of his stories to the Phaeacians.

As with all the monstrous encounters in the *Odyssey*, the fact that Odysseus narrates the events far after their occurrence indicates that the audience is not granted immediate narrative access to the moment of the encounter. Odysseus' account of the Sirens' song creates an illusion of access to the song, but the ears of Odysseus' crew (and of the *Odyssey*'s audience) are blocked from hearing the song. Furthermore, Odysseus gives no description of the Sirens' appearance, as if he never saw them at all, but only heard their song; and indeed, Odysseus omits any confirmation or denial of the Sirens' corpse-strewn meadow about which Circe foretells.<sup>249</sup> The discrepancies between Circe's forewarning about the Sirens and Odysseus' eventual encounter with them become fraught with what Pietro Pucci calls 'undecidability',<sup>250</sup> or a sense of 'uncanny tension'<sup>251</sup> surrounding the potentially competing veracities of poetic voices at work in this episode. The bone-covered meadow which Circe anticipates is absent in Odysseus' account. Pucci argues that this omission conjures a metapoetic sense of disturbance for audiences' and readers' overall relationship to poetry more broadly. When the dangerous Sirens 'have the same power of *thelgein* as the Iliadic, epic Muses',<sup>252</sup> and the song the Sirens offer echoes the content of the song of the *Odyssey* itself (*Od.* 12.184-191), readers of the *Odyssey* find themselves in a precarious and charged narrative space of 'undecidable' reading.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Pucci (1987). On the sensuality of the meadow, see Van Liefferinge (2012) 481-82.

<sup>250</sup> Pucci (1987) 209-213.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 212. See also Segal (1983) 38-40.

<sup>253</sup> See Doherty (1995) 128 on how the Sirens' song 'represents the most powerful challenge of a female narrator to the determinacy of the *Odyssey* text.' Vidal-Naquet (1996) 43 n. 51 reads the flowery meadow as an indication that it has transformed, somehow, from the rottenness which Circe foretells.

A further level of undecidability emerges in the visual realm. In other Greek literary references to the Sirens, they are represented as half-bird half-woman creatures,<sup>254</sup> but this avian characterisation is absent in the *Odyssey*.<sup>255</sup> Perhaps this is the case because Odysseus does not see the Sirens himself, or because it was assumed that the audience would infer the hybrid avian-female bodies.<sup>256</sup> Or, perhaps their bodies receive no description because their monstrosity lies far more profoundly in their voices than in their bodies. Both Odysseus and Circe tantalisingly omit any description of the phenomenological experience of listening to the Sirens' song, and even Odysseus neglects to narrate the majority of the song itself.<sup>257</sup> Despite the fact that the Sirens episode is a far less lengthy and interactive encounter than the one between Odysseus and Polyphemus, it is still rich with threat; and furthermore, it reveals the fundamental shape of Odysseus' deepest longings.

Circe instructs Odysseus very carefully about how to manage these monsters, warning him that no ship has ever got past the Sirens. She also adds the assurance that a god will remind him of her instructions at the crucial moment when the ship approaches the Sirens' isle. Thus Odysseus receives his advice for avoiding the Sirens from within a monstrous domestic space that bears similarities to the Sirens' own isle. This parallel between Circe and the Sirens continues the pattern whereby nonhuman entities amicable to the hero help him navigate hostile monsters.<sup>258</sup> Odysseus

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<sup>254</sup> Apollodorus (*Epit.* 7.18-19), Apollonius of Rhodes (*Argon.* 4.891-921), Hyginus (*Fab.* 125, 141), Ovid (*Met.* 5.552-562).

<sup>255</sup> Page (1973a) 85-90.

<sup>256</sup> See Aasved (1996), who points out the ambiguity of the relationship between Homer's Sirens and iconographic representations. Aasved finds the literary sources unsatisfactory for resolving the ambiguity, and so takes an ethnological approach: he treats the Sirens as 'fully human', and thereby assumes that Odysseus' lack of physiological description is a result of their human typicality rather than the possibility that he does not in fact see the Sirens (or, more abstractly, that the voice matters more than the body). See also Pollard (1952). Cf. *Odyssey* Book 9 does not explicitly reference Polyphemus' (or the other Cyclopes') monocularly. Mondt (1983) discusses this issue at length.

<sup>257</sup> See Doherty (1995) 139 and Schur (2014) on the incompleteness of the Sirens' song.

<sup>258</sup> On the various connections between the monstrous episodes of Books 9-12, see Heubeck et al. (1988) 10, Reinhardt (1996) 95.

finds Circe walking around her palace, singing with a sweet voice, and the palace is surrounded by the bodies of men who were once but are no longer human, described as *πέλωρα* (*Od.* 10.212-219).<sup>259</sup> Similarly, the sweetly singing Sirens live in a flowery meadow surrounded by men's bones and withering bodies.<sup>260</sup> Both Circe and the Sirens are therefore linked in that they are feminine singers whose voices are lethal for men's humanity. In this instance as elsewhere, Odysseus' monstrous encounters echo one another, and therefore Odysseus' own storytelling reveals the hero's strategic and rhetorical understanding of monstrosity through comparative consideration of his trials and encounters.<sup>261</sup>

Circe's strategy to get past the Sirens is as follows: Odysseus must instruct his men to tie him to the mast, taking away his agency and preventing him from sailing to the Sirens' shores (and therefore to his death).<sup>262</sup> Circe thus offers Odysseus a plan of action that allows him a brief sonic encounter with the song that no previous audience has survived. In doing so, Circe facilitates Odysseus' exceptionality to typical human experience. Odysseus' men, who are denied the privilege of hearing the Sirens' song, are instructed to row on, ears filled with wax to block the powerful sound from entering their ears and enchanting them. Through his special status as a hero, Odysseus is the one who is allowed to be penetrated by the magical music and still carry on with his life.<sup>263</sup> As Michael Nagler notes, Odysseus' 'way is not to avoid temptation – in this exotic scene “ordinary humanity” errs in the opposite direction, stuffing wax in its ears – but to overcome it.'<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> *Od.* 10.212-219. See Segal (1998) 85-86 on the Sirens and Circe as figures that collectively exhibit the fact that 'the musical seduction of the... magical voice is analogous to the sexual seductiveness of the female in general.'

<sup>260</sup> *Od.* 12.45-46.

<sup>261</sup> See Finley (1978) 97.

<sup>262</sup> *Od.* 12.39-54.

<sup>263</sup> Padel (1992) 65.

<sup>264</sup> Nagler (1996) 157.

Again, this episode depicts Odysseus mingling with the monstrous – both in acquiring the strategy from Circe, but also in gaining access to the sonic experience of the Sirens without losing his life in the process. Odysseus again imitates the mechanisms of the monster’s violence to counteract its power: the Sirens’ spell-binding song is here counteracted by the literal binding of the man to the mast. The hero therefore employs the same metaphorical ‘technology’ of bonds to defeat, or at least survive, the Sirens. Furthermore, their honey-sweet<sup>265</sup> sound is blocked from the ears of the crew by beeswax. This device repurposes the monsters’ tools, since the honey-sweet quality that fuels the Sirenic vocal seduction is blockaded by wax, another apian product.<sup>266</sup>

Although each monstrous encounter reveals a different strategic practice, the hero consistently employs the monster’s own weaponry, in some translated form, in order to survive the monster. The Sirens episode, however, poses threats of a rather different quality, and it presents a more complex psychological challenge to the hero. Polyphemus, the Laestrygonians, and Scylla and Charybdis all at various points threaten bodily harm through explicit violence and cannibalism; and Circe too threatened the end of human life through animal metamorphosis. The precise or literal quality of the Sirenic threat, however, is harder to identify, and invites certain questions. What does it mean that no one hears their song and survives to tell the tale? How does their song exert its power and violence?

At several points, the narrative voices of the *Odyssey* prepare its audience to meet the Sirens on a different plane from the other monsters. This is partly because the Sirens threaten by means of intellectual seduction, and also because the way that death falls upon the Sirens’ victims is left unspecified:<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>265</sup>μελίγηρυν, *Od.* 12.187.

<sup>266</sup> On the connection between Sirens and bees, see Germain (1954) 387-390 and Van Liefferinge (2012) 480.

<sup>267</sup> See Ford (1992) 51 on the Sirens’ song as a suggestion that ‘one may read into Homer the neoclassical blend of *dulce* with *utile* and say that his poems contain both truth and delight.’ See also Segal (1983) 43. On the ambiguity

“Ταῦτα μὲν οὕτω πάντα πεπείρανται, σὺ δ’ ἄκουσον,  
ὥς τοι ἐγὼν ἐρέω, μνήσει δέ σε καὶ θεὸς αὐτός.  
Σειρήνας μὲν πρῶτον ἀφίξεαι, αἶ ῥά τε πάντας  
ἀνθρώπους θέλγουσιν, ὅτις σφεας εἰσαφίκηται.  
ὅς τις ἀϊδρεῖη πελάση καὶ φθόγγον ἀκούση  
Σειρήνων, τῷ δ’ οὐ τι γυνὴ καὶ νήπια τέκνα  
οἴκαδε νοστήσαντι παρίσταται οὐδὲ γάνυνται,  
ἀλλὰ τε Σειρήνες λιγυρῆ θέλγουσιν ἀοιδῆ,  
ἤμεναι ἐν λειμῶνι, πολὺς δ’ ἄμφ’ ὀστεόφιν θις  
ἀνδρῶν πυθομένων, περὶ δὲ ῥινοὶ μινύθουσι.  
ἀλλὰ παρέξ ἐλάαν, ἐπὶ δ’ οὐατ’ ἀλεῖναι ἐταίρων  
κηρὸν δεψησας μελιηδέα, μὴ τις ἀκούση  
τῶν ἄλλων· ἀτὰρ αὐτὸς ἀκουέμεν αἶ κ’ ἐθέλησθα,  
δησάντων σ’ ἐν νηὶ θοῆ χειράς τε πόδας τε  
ὄρθον ἐν ἱστοπέδῃ, ἐκ δ’ αὐτοῦ πείρατ’ ἀνήφθω,  
ὄφρα κε τερπόμενος ὄπ’ ἀκούσης Σειρήνοϊν.  
εἰ δέ κε λίσσῃαι ἐτάρους λῦσαι τε κελεύης,  
οἱ δέ σ’ ἐνὶ πλεόνεσσι τότε δεσμοῖσι διδέντων.” (Od. 12.36-54)

Circe’s warning to Odysseus does not account for the Sirens’ mode of violence, and instead merely indicates a pattern. The Sirens sing, men draw near, they are beguiled, they never return home, and the Sirens sit surrounded by the decaying corpses of sailors.<sup>268</sup>

When Odysseus finally reaches the oceanic realm surrounding the Sirens’ meadow, he hears their song and gives a very brief description of their voices and their words. He quotes their self-referential invitation to come listen to their anticipated but deferred song:<sup>269</sup>

“Δεῦρ’ ἄγ’ ἰὼν, πολύαιν’ Ὀδυσσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,  
νηὴ κατάστησον, ἵνα νοῦτέρην ὄπ’ ἀκούσης.  
οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῆδε παρήλασε νηὶ μελαίνῃ,  
πρὶν γ’ ἡμέων μελίγηρυν ἀπὸ στομάτων ὄπ’ ἀκούσαι,  
ἀλλ’ ὅ γε τερψάμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς.  
ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ’ ὅσ’ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ  
Ἀργεῖοι Τρῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν·  
ἴδμεν δ’ ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ.” (Od. 12.184-191)

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of their violence, see Aasved (1996) 383-384. Both Buschor (1944) and Pollard (1952) assert that the Sirens do not devour their victims.

<sup>268</sup> See Vidal-Naquet (1996) 159 on the Sirens as ‘a fiercer version of the Lotus-Eaters’ and the argument that ‘the Sirens belong to the rotten.’ See also Segal (1983) 40-41. On the verb *thelgein* in Homer and elsewhere, see Parry (1992) 286.

<sup>269</sup> Schur (2014).

Thus the Sirens invite the hero to abandon his present mission of completing his homecoming, his *nostos*, in exchange for a nostalgic surrender to the pleasures of temporal regression by listening to songs about the past – songs which, we as the audience never get to hear.<sup>270</sup>

Given the particular character of the hero, it is easy to imagine that the temptation they offer to Odysseus would carry tremendous force. The temptation pivots around the desire not only to hear the beautiful song, but to hear a particular song about Odysseus' own glories and triumphs. As Reinhardt notes, 'The magical song becomes a heroic epic. The Sirens know the overwhelming effect of fame from the mouth of a poet.'<sup>271</sup> The fact of the song's performance by divinely skilled singers who recognise him without introduction only amplifies the temptation.<sup>272</sup> Odysseus is, after all, the hero whose obsession with the fabrication of his own *kleos* makes him simultaneously perseverant and foolish. This obsession drives him to persevere through remarkable circumstances but also to exclaim his identity to the Cyclops as his boat steers away – an exclamation of identity that results in a formidable curse from Poseidon that causes many of Odysseus' troubles at sea.<sup>273</sup>

Where Odysseus desperately attempts to secure a future for himself in Ithaca throughout his adventures at sea, the Sirens represent the lure of surrendering, letting go, and sinking into accomplishments of the past. Thus the song of the Sirens positions the past – the stories of the Trojan War – in direct and precarious competition with the present temporal trajectory of the narrative of the *Odyssey* itself, and thus too with the social and familial responsibilities that propel

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<sup>270</sup> Pucci (1987) and (1996) emphasise the Sirens' connections to poetry and to reading, but I maintain that their elusive musical aspect is just as significant as the words which they sing. Like Circe, Calypso, and the Muses (*Il.* 1.604; *Theog.* 68), the Sirens emit an *opa*, and as Ford (1992) 176 writes, 'For *opa* is basically a distinctive vocal sound; it may name voices that convey intelligence or thought, but these are the especially emotional or stirring voices.' See also Schur (2014).

<sup>271</sup> Reinhardt (1996) 75.

<sup>272</sup> See Pucci (1996) on the Sirens' omniscience (or lack thereof).

<sup>273</sup> See Austin (1983) 5 on Odysseus' 'inappropriate... glee' at his own brutalism and trickery toward the Cyclops. See also Segal (1983) 33.

that narrative.<sup>274</sup> Odysseus can persist in his long journey home, or he can rest and enjoy the sweet song of the Sirens, who offer musical celebrations of the hero and his Iliadic victories. To Odysseus, whose notoriously difficult journey attempts a particular mode of return (the *nostos*), the Sirens offer something more readily available – the escapist comfort of song, and its own unique mode of return.<sup>275</sup> In the realm of the Sirens, the past threatens to triumph over the present and future: it is the temptation of hearing these former glories that nearly draws Odysseus into oblivion.<sup>276</sup>

The narrative moves into a markedly different temporal sphere – shifting from Odyssean time into the regressive temporality of song – as the ship approaches the Sirens' isle. Andrew Ford describes a particular mode of untimeliness conjured by epic poetry, which is established by means of the proximity and tension between *mnêmosunê* and *lêsмосunê* in Hesiod:

*Mnêmosunê*, mindfulness, is so closely related to *lêsмосunê* (forgetfulness) by Hesiod because the poetry of the past must make its audience forget its own present; for this to happen the here and now of the performance must give way to create a space for the earlier age to appear.<sup>277</sup>

This untimely quality of epic song in general is amplified, in the realm of the Sirens, both by their untimely, Iliadic voices, and also by the deathly ambience into which Odysseus and his crew find themselves as they approach the Sirens. Odysseus describes to the Phaeacians the eerie calm that signifies his entrance into Sirenic territory:

τόφρα δὲ καρπαλίμως ἐξίκετο νηῦς ἐυεργῆς  
νηῖσον Σειρήνοισιν· ἔπειγε γὰρ οὖρος ἀπήμων.  
αὐτίκ' ἔπειτ' ἄνεμος μὲν ἐπαύσατο ἠδὲ γαλήνη  
ἔπλετο νηνεμία, κοίμησε δὲ κύματα δαίμων. (*Od.* 12.166-170)

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<sup>274</sup> Pucci (1996) 195-96.

<sup>275</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, on the idea that the Sirens appeal to Odysseus as a “literary” character of the *Iliad*.

<sup>276</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, for a close-reading of their song that links their rhetoric to the diction of the *Iliad*. Pucci argues that the Sirens evoke the literary past of Odysseus through the ways they craft their voices.

<sup>277</sup> Ford (1992) 126.

The encounter with the Sirens is Odysseus' first monstrous encounter after his *nekyuia*, and thus the audience meets the Sirens in the narrative realm of death.<sup>278</sup> This scene continues to evoke a deathly atmosphere because of the precariousness in which it positions the lives of Odysseus and his crewmen, but also because of its otherworldly quality.<sup>279</sup> The same social forces that propel Odysseus on his journey recede and lose currency in this Sirenic realm. This stillness which marks Odysseus' passage into Sirenic territory functions both as a moment of divine signification for Odysseus to remember Circe's warning and as a narrative signification of the dangers that the Sirens pose.

Whether we take the oceanic calm as an indication of Sirenic associations with midday demons, death demons, seductresses, or a message from a daimon to Odysseus,<sup>280</sup> the sudden stillness also functions as an indicator that the Sirens inhabit a territory fundamentally outside of normative human experience. Their land, described as a λειμῶν' ἀνθεμόεντα (*Od.* 12.159), is on the one hand, a primitive and uncultivated landscape, but on the other, a cemetery filled with desiccated corpses: πολὺς δ' ἄμφ' ὀστεόφιν θις | ἀνδρῶν πυθομένων (*Od.* 12.45-46).

Just as the stilling of the sea suggests the ship's entrance into a daimonic territory, the departure of Odysseus' ship induces a curtain of chaos and smoke that closes the scene, sealing off the realm of the Sirens. Odysseus describes the sonic transformation that follows his ship's departure from Sirenic proximity: 'Ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὴν νῆσον ἐλείπομεν, αὐτίκ' ἔπειτα | καπνὸν καὶ

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<sup>278</sup> See Neils (1995) 180-181 on the Sirens' appearances on tombs. On the overlaps between Sirens and noon-day demons, see Davies (2005). For the association between Sirens and death in the sixth century, see Pollard (1965) 137-144.

<sup>279</sup> Pucci (1987) 211.

<sup>280</sup> Heubeck et al. (1988) 127. Cf. Gresseth (1970), who also argues against the presence of a midday demon and at p. 210 n. 14 gives bibliography on this issue. Davies (2005) 225-228, who places the arguments in dialogue takes the position that the Sirens were not necessarily midday or death demons, but that they might at least carry the associations of these, along with 'soul birds' and 'otherworld enchantresses' without conflict.

μέγα κῦμα ἴδον καὶ δοῦπον ἄκουσα’ (*Od.* 12.201-202). The Sirens live in an otherworldly space that promises Odysseus respite from the battering winds of divine will and monstrous might that have blown him about so aggressively for the entire epic. The strange stillness of the Sirens imposes on Odysseus a magnetism to an untimely elsewhere, which threatens to pull Odysseus and his crew out of their own ‘plot-time.’ The thread of the *Odyssey* itself is thus pulled and distorted into the supernatural influence of the Sirenic voice.<sup>281</sup>

These Sirens stand out from the other Odyssean monsters insofar as they are not explicitly described as cannibalistic,<sup>282</sup> violent, or gigantic. But still, the Sirens participate in modes of violence and threat shared by the other monsters Odysseus meets in Books 9-12. The Sirens represent a subtle inversion of the threat issued by the nonhuman Charybdis, for example: just as Charybdis sucks in the sea and spews it back out, the Sirens exhale a sweet but deadly melody that attracts passing sailors, and sucks them into their demise. And although the Sirens do not overtly threaten to consume Odysseus and his men, the Sirenic song threatens to cannibalise the *Odyssey* itself.

The binary opposition between the ‘good’ Penelope – the faithful wife who awaits Odysseus’ return – and the ‘bad’ Sirens is complicated furthermore by the fact that the Sirens’ song appeals directly to Odysseus’ obsession with the idea of having his triumphs translated into song.<sup>283</sup> Odysseus needs to finish the journey so that his stories can be told in the form of song, so the Sirens’ disingenuous, deadly offer represents a possible perversion of the entire trajectory of the Odyssean narrative. The desire for homecoming and glory and the desire invoked by the

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<sup>281</sup> See Pucci (1996) on competing narratives between the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* posed in this scene.

<sup>282</sup> Page (1973a) 89-90. Cf. Vidal-Naquet (1996) 43 who notes that ‘the Sirens belong to the rotten.’

<sup>283</sup> Cf. Hopman (2012) 84-88 on the ways in which various female monsters and nonhumans in Books 9-12 function as foils to Penelope, particularly through the image of weaving. On Circe as a ‘demonic version of Penelope’, see Parry (1992) 56-57.

Sirens' song pivot around the same juncture – the transmission of Odysseus' own fame through song.

Thus it is through the appeal to Odysseus' fame and glory, or in Greek, his *kleos*, that the Sirens wield their danger; and in threatening to take away Odysseus' possibility of returning home, the song carries the potency to annihilate Odysseus' very essence. It threatens that he surrender, sabotage the cultivation of his own song to the immediate gratification offered by theirs, and therefore collapse into himself at the expense of himself. By the time Odysseus encounters the Sirens, he has willfully emerged from the respective seductions of the goddesses Calypso<sup>284</sup> and Circe, whose divine and bewitching power, paired with the allure of sensual pleasure, held the hero from his return to Ithaca. Odysseus has broken away from these divine and bodily temptations – even broken away from the temptation of Calypso's offering of immortality – but the Sirens issue an even more profoundly enticing pull for Odysseus, despite the fact that they do not offer their bodies, nor do they wield a divine power that could physically keep him from continuing his journey.

Instead, the Sirens tempt him with their voices, which wrap themselves around his *kleos*, the story of his very own self. They invite him to sink into his story-glory, regressing into a narcissistic whirlpool of oblivion, which would of course ironically result in annihilation of Odysseus' own self. In this way, surpassing the Sirens becomes Odysseus' ultimate challenge to and for his own selfhood. The *Odyssey* demonstrates that the temptations offered by sound and by music, in particular, can overshadow temptations offered by the flesh. The encounter with the Sirens thereby demonstrates the dual inflection of Odysseus' desire for *kleos*. This drive which enables Odysseus to persevere through remarkable circumstances is the same drive which threatens the oblivion of

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<sup>284</sup> See Anderson (1958) 6 on the parallels between Calypso's Isle and Elysium and Odysseus' departure from Calypso as indicative of his 'attitude... toward life itself.'

the soul, if the quest for *kleos* is not managed correctly.

Indeed, the seduction of the Sirens' song is not an overtly physical one. Homer's Sirens are what we might call 'all voice, no body', insofar as the *Odyssey* offers no description of the Sirens' physiognomy.<sup>285</sup> This is perhaps a result of the fact that they engender an intense psycho-physiological experience for their listener through the medium of the voice itself, rather than through visibility or tactility. The erotic power of listening to a voice, the *Odyssey* seems to say, transcends the mere visibility and corporeality typical of erotic encounters. Monsters, in Greek mythology, then, can offer threats by means of their sonic capacities, and in the case of the Sirens, the voice and its effect upon human desire is the precise locus of that monstrosity.

With the help of Circe's advice, Odysseus surpasses the Sirens and saves himself through the symbolic gesture of self-binding. In tying himself to the ship's mast, he protects himself from the spell-binding power of song. This song threatens to 'loos[e] all ties' that connect Odysseus to Ithaca:<sup>286</sup> and in the case of the Sirens, as Ford notes, the song takes on the binding properties associated with the realm of magic:

The problem is, of course, that this thrilling song destroys its mortal listeners, who lose their ability to return to wife and children, finally withering away (12.39-43). In the Sirens, 'infernal counterparts to the Muses,' the enchantment of poetry reveals its sinister side: their song is a binding spell for Odysseus, for the price of listening to it is to be fixed fast.<sup>287</sup>

Part of the lure of the Sirenic song, according to Ford, emerges from the fact that their song offers a totality of intellectual truth that surpasses that which the Muses give to poets. Whereas the *kleos* of the Muses is a distilled and partial selection of a larger truth, the Sirens offer to Odysseus the

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<sup>285</sup> Schein (1995) 17 points out that the *Odyssey* very rarely gives much visual detail about women's appearances and instead focuses on the 'phenomenology' or experiential impact of beholding them. Odysseus does not offer any such phenomenology of the Sirens' appearance.

<sup>286</sup> Cf. Ford (1992) 111, on Alcinous' comparison of Odysseus' to a bard for his spell-binding effects on the Phaeacian audience.

<sup>287</sup> Ford (1992) 84. See also Buschor (1944). Cf. Pollard (1952) who argues against the Sirens as infernal incarnations of the Muses. Parry (1992) 91 writes that the 'Sirens' song suggests binding as *katadesmos*, a demonic counterpart of order and a purpose of the spell.'

promise of the ‘sweet, complete’, and ‘total’ rendition of the Trojan War and everything that happens on the earth.<sup>288</sup>

Simultaneously unleashing the force of a binding spell and offering truth that transcends all poetic bounds, the Sirens also emit sinister metaphorical echoes of other central strings and bonds that run throughout the *Odyssey*. They represent a macabre inversion of the strings that his wife Penelope weaves at home, as she weaves a shroud for Odysseus’ father; the Sirens instead weave a sonic shroud for Odysseus himself. So too do the ropes with which Odysseus self-binds echo the strings of the Fates, whose threads measure the life and destiny of each man. Odysseus ties himself up with string, with cords, to secure himself within his own fate; and the Sirens tempt him to break away these very threads and to defy his ordained lot of glory and successful return to Ithaca. Yet the musical c(h)ords that the Sirens weave in their song also function as a manifestation of Odysseus’ very self. These monsters present to him his own interiority, his own fate, as they weave himself in their song, and thus the Sirens appear as particularly malevolent counterparts to the Fates, Penelope, the Muses, and even Circe.<sup>289</sup> c(h)ords, and their varying tones, become a vivid image that connects these various feminine figures and clarifies their relationship to the hero and his homecoming.<sup>290</sup>

The Sirens therefore function as the *Odyssey*’s most vivid manifestation of the ways in which sound can become a component of what makes the monster monstrous. In the case of the Sirens, the arresting sound and alluring promise of their voices, paired with the power that music itself exercises over the human mind, function like weapons. Lillian Doherty links drugs, seduction, and music as a nexus of powerful and dangerous forces throughout the *Odyssey*:

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<sup>288</sup> Ford (1992) 86.

<sup>289</sup> When Odysseus’ crew arrives at Circe’s palace, she is singing and weaving (10.221-223). Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) ad *Od.* 188-191 connect the Homeric Sirens to the Hesiodic Muses.

<sup>290</sup> Brilliant (1995) 170-172 makes this connection between Penelope and Circe in particular, and also to the Sirens.

[A]n equation between a drug (even a ‘good’ drug), an act of seduction, and a bard’s power to charm an audience suggestions that there is an inherent danger in listening to stories – and the better told, the more dangerous the story.<sup>291</sup>

Yet the mechanisms by which these Sirenic weapons and the dangers of their stories operate are unclear.

Neither the narrator nor Odysseus explicitly states that the voice itself enacts violence on the listener’s body, causing the mind to literally melt or wither,<sup>292</sup> or perhaps the heart to stop – for if that were the case, surely there would have been some consequences for Odysseus when he listened to their sung invitation. It is not the music itself, but the effect of song upon human experience. The Sirenic weaponry derives its power from music’s unique capacity to stop time, to distract from the procedures of ‘reality’ and to suck the listener into song itself at the expense of his own external conditions – perhaps causing the listener to waste away into shriveled skin and bones, as we may read from Circe’s warnings about the scenery which the Sirens occupy.<sup>293</sup>

In addition to the time-altering properties of epic song, a major source of the Siren song’s psychological power and efficacy comes from its precise individuation, from the way in which the Sirens craft the song for the pleasure and seduction of a specific listener. Homer’s Sirens call out to Odysseus specifically, as they recognise the hero and his legendary status, address him in the second person, and tailor the song to him. There is a song whose notes are written on the staff of the individual human soul. Odysseus’ wanderings have in some ways reduced his identity and humanity out of the realm of recognition.<sup>294</sup> Heubeck notes that the hero loses his identity in the

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<sup>291</sup> Doherty (1995) 134. Cf. Most (1989), and Finley (1978) 108-109, who connects the Sirens’ song and its ‘sympathy’ to Circe’s and Helen’s magic spells.

<sup>292</sup> Cf. the Erinyes’ binding song in *Eum.* 307-396.

<sup>293</sup> Pucci (1987) 209-211.

<sup>294</sup> Segal (1962) 18 describes Books 9-12 as particularly rich grounds for staging ‘death and rebirth, with change of state and the loss and resumption of identity’; he also argues (18-24) that the Phaeacians begin and facilitate Odysseus’ own return to humanity after his monstrous encounters, and finally that the Polyphemus encounter stages Odysseus’ ‘lowest ebb of humanity’ (36) which is later reinstated.

guise of 'Outis' and gradually loses a range of components that define his humanity and selfhood in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*:

Odysseus' adventures lead us on a long journey during which the proud commander and conqueror loses first his fleet and most of his men, then the rest of his companions and his last ship together with his possessions, and finally, even his own identity; a nameless Nobody stands naked and defenceless before Nausicaa, lacking rights or possessions, more like an animal than a man (vi 127f.). But here, at the lower point in his fortunes, when his human personality has been virtually obliterated, there are the seeds of renewed life; this is the starting-point for a final arduous journey which, set in a world very different from that of the hero's tales and in the reverse direction, leads to a recovery of identity, to a re-establishment of existence in human society, as the king is restored to his family, his community, and his kingdom. Thus the poet has made these adventures a crucial element in this epic of a soldier's return.<sup>295</sup>

The Sirens' song emerges at the centre of this process of the hero's deflation and erosion, and thus their recognition and praise of the hero arrives at a pivotal juncture for Odysseus. They capitalise on the skeletal structure of Odysseus' fundamentally human crises and desires in order to enact their unique mode of alluring monstrosity. This is perhaps why Odysseus does not describe the song more fully. It is so seductive because it is specifically *for* him,<sup>296</sup> rather than for a general audience. Any attempt to render it fully would therefore give an inadequate representation of its power. Just as Odysseus uses the technology of monsters and the Sirens in particular to secure his life against the power of their voices, they too identify and exploit Odysseus' own drive toward return that propels his *nostos*.

Through the Sirens as well as the other monsters whom Odysseus meets at sea, the drama of voice and sound reveals that the monster and the human are mutually engaged in observation, imitation, and navigation of one another. And although Odysseus escapes the Sirens' song with his life intact, this monstrous encounter taps into the power of voice to explore the deep connection

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<sup>295</sup> Heubeck et al. (1988) 8.

<sup>296</sup> Cf. Pucci (1996) 192. See also Reinhardt (1996) 75, and Doherty (1995) 73 on the Sirenic audience in the context of gendered audiences throughout the *Odyssey*.

between the categories of hero and monster. The Sirens identify Odysseus' eminently human desires for family, home, and reputation, and transform those desires into a song that becomes a monstrous weapon. The Sirens thus offer one of the more transparent examples of the seduction that monsters exert over heroes, and specifically Odysseus. On the metaphysical space occupied by the monster figure across time and cultures, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen writes that '[t]he monstrous lurks somewhere in that ambiguous, primal space between fear and attraction.'<sup>297</sup> The Sirens in particular represent something like the fear *of* attraction, or fears about what appetite, seduction, and desire do to the human being.

Even for Odysseus, the status of the human reveals itself to be fraught, through so many close encounters and near fusions with monstrosity in Books 9 through 12 of the *Odyssey*. We may approach a fuller understanding of the Homeric Sirens if we leave off reading symbolism into their (invisible) bodies, and instead begin to listen more closely to the descriptions of their voices and the effect of their voices. What we find is something far more central to questions about the link between sound and desire, to the question of what it means to be human, to the question of how humans can both indulge and survive their individuated desires.

### **Scylla and Charybdis**

By the time Odysseus meets the paired cliffs of Scylla and Charybdis, the hero has already escaped and navigated Polyphemus, Circe, and the Sirens. Odysseus engineered these escapes by imitating the technologies of these nonhuman antagonists, but this strategy proves useless when he faces the two cliffs. Circe's description of Scylla and Charybdis reveals that these two entities do not enable

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<sup>297</sup> Cohen (1996) 19.

the same practice of Odyssean imitation,<sup>298</sup> for they are fundamentally nonhuman and therefore preclude the possibility of behavioural mimicry. According to Circe's taxonomy, both Scylla and Charybdis are cliffs, δύω σκόπελοι (*Od.* 12.73), and therefore the narrative introduces these entities foremost as elemental phenomena rather than as characters with the sort of interactive subjectivity that is present in Polyphemus, Circe, and the Sirens.

Scylla and Charybdis are ascribed the lowest level of humanity of all the nonhuman antagonists in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*. This nonhumanity resounds in their soundscapes, their appearances, and their modes of violence. Scylla manifests distinctly monstrous physiognomy, with her six heads, three rows of death-bringing teeth, twelve legs, half-hidden substratum (*Od.* 12.89-92), and canine vocality (*Od.* 12.85-87). All of these features are amplified by Circe's mention that encountering Scylla would be a misfortune even to a god (*Od.* 12.87-88) and Circe's description of Scylla as a πέλωρ κακόν (*Od.* 12.87).<sup>299</sup> Charybdis is described, on the other hand, as both a natural phenomenon and a divine force.<sup>300</sup> Less attention is paid to her appearance than to her forcefulness: as Heubeck and Hoekstra note, Charybdis is characterised primarily 'in terms of the damage she causes.'<sup>301</sup> Circe advises Odysseus to draw his ship closer to Scylla than Charybdis so that he lose only some companions rather than the entire ship, although she leaves the course up to him to decide.

Odysseus evidently finds Circe's guidelines regarding Scylla and Charybdis less palatable than the goddess's prior advice regarding the Sirens, for it does not allow him any agency in the avoidance of monstrous violence. Furthermore, Circe's guidance here prevents Odysseus from

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<sup>298</sup> Cf. Hopman (2012) 28-29 on Circe's Iliadic diction in describing Scylla. On the Iliadic elements in the Scylla episode more generally, see *ibid.*, 26-31 and 28 n. 17 for bibliography.

<sup>299</sup> On the likeness between Circe's description of Scylla's cave and Hesiod's description of Tartarus, see Hopman (2012) 31-32.

<sup>300</sup> δῖα Χάρυβδις, *Od.* 12.104.

<sup>301</sup> Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) ad *Od.* 101-110.

practising his heroic gesture of imitating the monster in order to circumvent its power, and he asks Circe if there is truly nothing he can do to escape Charybdis or deflect the advances of Scylla (*Od.* 12.110-114).

Circe also impresses upon Odysseus a sense of great intractability with regard to these paired figures. She notes that the dark cloud surrounding Scylla is eternally present,<sup>302</sup> that not even a twenty-handed and -footed man would be able to climb the cliff,<sup>303</sup> and that not even Poseidon could rescue someone whom Charybdis would swallow.<sup>304</sup> This shift from ‘manageable’ monsters to intractable ones is marked in the soundscape. As his ship approaches Charybdis, Odysseus finds himself in an altogether different sonic realm than the one generated by the Sirens. Introduced with pure sound and chaos, Charybdis paralyzes Odysseus’ men in terror:

Ἄλλ’ ὅτε δὴ τὴν νῆσον ἐλείπομεν, αὐτίκ’ ἔπειτα  
καπνὸν καὶ μέγα κῦμα ἴδον καὶ δοῦπον ἄκουσα.  
τῶν δ’ ἄρα δεισάντων ἐκ χειρῶν ἔπατα’ ἔρετμᾶ,  
βόμβησαν δ’ ἄρα πάντα κατὰ ρόον· ἔσχετο δ’ αὐτοῦ  
νηῦς, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτ’ ἔρετμὰ προήκεα χερσὶν ἔπειγον. (*Od.* 12.201-205)

In response to this, Odysseus gives a speech to embolden and prepare his comrades to face the imminent threats posed by the oncoming monsters. Yet still, the sense of intractability is reinforced by Odysseus’ use, or disuse, of his own voice:

“ὦ φίλοι, οὐ γὰρ πῶ τι κακῶν ἀδαήμενές εἰμεν·  
οὐ μὲν δὴ τόδε μείζον ἐπι κακόν, ἢ ὅτε Κύκλωψ  
εἴλει ἐνὶ σπηϊ γλαφυρῶ κρατερῆφι βίηφιν·  
ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔνθεν ἐμῆ ἄρετῆ βουλῆ τε νόῳ τε  
ἐκφύγομεν, καὶ πού τῶνδε μνήσεσθαι οἴω.  
νῦν δ’ ἄγεθ’, ὡς ἂν ἐγὼ εἶπω, πειθώμεθα πάντες.  
ὕμεῖς μὲν κόπησιν ἀλὸς ῥηγμῖνα βαθεῖαν  
τύπτετε κληϊδεςσιν ἐφήμενοι, αἶ κέ ποθι Ζεὺς  
δώη τόνδε γ’ ὄλεθρον ὑπεκφυγέειν καὶ ἀλύξαι·  
σοὶ δέ, κυβερνήθ’, ὧδ’ ἐπιτέλλομαι· ἀλλ’ ἐνὶ θυμῷ  
βάλλευ, ἐπεὶ νηὸς γλαφυρῆς οἰήϊα νομᾶς.

<sup>302</sup> *Od.* 12.74-76.

<sup>303</sup> *Od.* 12.77-78.

<sup>304</sup> *Od.* 12.106-107.

τούτου μὲν καπνοῦ καὶ κύματος ἐκτὸς ἔεργε  
νῆα, σὺ δὲ σκοπέλου ἐπιμαίεο, μὴ σε λάθησι  
κεῖσ' ἐξομήσασα καὶ ἐς κακὸν ἄμμε βάλησθα.”  
Ὡς ἐφάμην, οἱ δ' ὄκα ἐμοῖς ἐπέεσσι πίθοντο.  
Σκύλλην δ' οὐκέτ' ἐμυθεόμην, ἄπρηκτον ἀνίην,  
μὴ πῶς μοι δεῖσαντες ἀπολλήξειαν ἑταῖροι  
εἰρεσίης, ἐντὸς δὲ πυκάζοιεν σφέας αὐτούς. (*Od.* 12.208-225)

Reminding the crew that they have suffered sorrows previously, Odysseus assures his comrades that the present moment will, in turn, become a memory of a challenge surmounted. The terrifying reality they are about to encounter, he reassures, will become a story of the past. But in giving a forecast of a future that he prophesies will in turn become a past, he sidesteps the imminent present represented by the dual threat of Scylla and Charybdis, who together have the ‘effect of double jaws.’<sup>305</sup> Odysseus does not mention the inevitable slaughter posed by Scylla, since he imagines that knowledge of her would horrify the sailors into stopping the movement of the ship (a safe assessment, based on their stasis when faced with Charybdis). I have argued throughout this chapter that the soundscapes of the monsters shift from humanoid to nonhuman, and that Odysseus’ own voice transforms from a clever tool into an ineffectual medium. In this instance, his voice fails even to relay the oncoming threat, because his voice bears no agency in the encounter with Scylla. All his voice can do to ensure his survival is to omit speech and remain silent about Scylla.

Scylla herself is anything but silent: her six heads emit not a humanoid voice, but rather the barkings of a whelp. Scylla’s voice signals the fact that she allows no possibility for interaction. Circe describes the sounds generated by Scylla as somehow in contrast with her form:

ἔνθα δ' ἐνὶ Σκύλλῃ ναίει δεινὸν λελακυῖα·  
τῆς ἧ̃ τοι φωνὴ μὲν ὄση σκύλακος νεογιλῆς  
γίγνεται, αὐτὴ δ' αὖτε πέλωρ κακόν· οὐδέ κέ τις μιν  
γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν, οὐδ' εἰ θεὸς ἀντιάσειε. (*Od.* 12.85-88)

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<sup>305</sup> Reinhardt (1996) 74.

Circe makes Scylla's first set of identifying features her location and terrible voice. Her non-semiotic expressions resound in the shrill tones of a yelping puppy, suggesting either a general canine senselessness or the sonic assault of insistent, loud, and high-pitched shrieking.<sup>306</sup> The whelpish qualities of this voice is situated as somehow in contrast to her terror (δ' αὐ̃τε), likely due to the mismatch between her mountainous and towering visage and the sound that typically belongs to a small and somewhat helpless animal.<sup>307</sup>

Scylla, however, is not the only enormous and threatening monster in the Greek tradition to be given a puppy-like voice. The great opponent to Zeus, Typhon, also includes yelps in his retinue of voices in Hesiod's *Theogony*.<sup>308</sup> In both Hesiod and Homer, multi-headed shrill barks accompany the most threatening of monstrous opponents. The soundscapes attributed to both Scylla and Typhon are predicated on excessive, mismatched vocalisations that manifest the respective levels of intractability attached to these monsters.

Scylla behaves like an insurmountable<sup>309</sup> and predatory beast,<sup>310</sup> and Charybdis performs her swallowing and belching according to an ambiguous natural routine (*Od.* 12.105-106), without any comprehensible intentionality or subjectivity driving their violence. Scylla and Charybdis are therefore the set of monsters that completely lacks comprehensible intellectual or metaphorical tools which can be employed by Odysseus and translated into heroic violence against them.

As a unit, Scylla and Charybdis take on the force of conjoined monster twins, and as such, this pair is the biggest, most thoroughly hybridised, most excessive, the most incomprehensibly

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<sup>306</sup> On the post-Homeric association of Scylla with dogs in iconography, see Hopman (2012) 92 n.8.

<sup>307</sup> On the yelping as compatible with Scylla's caninity in other versions of the myth, see Felton (2013) 121.

<sup>308</sup> For further elaboration on Typhon's voice as a manifestation of his monstrosity, see Chapter 1, 60-65 of this thesis. Cf. Typhon's voices, Hes. *Th.* 829-835.

<sup>309</sup> For the *Odyssey*'s consistent characterisation of Scylla as an 'invincible monster', see Hopman (2012) 25.

<sup>310</sup> *Od.* 12.93-97.

malevolent. Indeed, this pair is also most akin to the violent and incorrigible threats of the sea itself. As much as Odysseus has demonstrated his heroic capacity to behave like the monster in order to surpass it, he finally meets two monsters with whom he cannot mingle, and whom he therefore cannot surpass. Whereas Odysseus could enjoy the cheese in Polyphemos' cave, the food and erotic offerings of Circe's palace, and the acoustic and intellectual delights of the Sirens' meadow, the cliffs of Scylla and Charybdis offer nothing to the heroic sensory appetite other than marvel, death, and helplessness.

Odysseus cannot help but attempt some kind of contact: despite Circe's pronouncement that this would be a foolish deed.<sup>311</sup> Odysseus proceeds to witness and describe the sight of Charybdis' destruction, horrifying not only in its certainty of death for Odysseus' companions, but also in its destruction of discrete categories. Within Charybdis' whirlpool, everything becomes turmoil, earth appears within the sea, a terrifying, ambiguous roar surges outward from the absolute destruction:

ἀλλ' ὅτ' ἀναβρόξειε θαλάσσης ἀλμυρὸν ὕδωρ,  
πᾶσ' ἔντοσθε φάνεσκε κυκωμένη, ἀμφὶ δὲ πέτρῃ  
δεινὸν βεβρύχει, ὑπένερθε δὲ γαῖα φάνεσκε  
ψάμμω κυανέῃ· τοὺς δὲ χλωρὸν δέος ἦρει. (*Od.* 12.240-243)

The threat posed by Charybdis' whirlpool of violence is activated by Scylla, who strikes Odysseus' ship while the men are distracted by fear of Charybdis. Scylla seizes six of them, and as she pulls them away, the men are compared to little fishes and the monster to fisherman, pole, and bait all in one. Where the whirlpool of Charybdis threatened to reduce everything to intermingled, destroyed turmoil, the violence of Scylla reduces the men to fish,<sup>312</sup> just as Polyphemos' violence against Odysseus' companions had reduced them to puppies.<sup>313</sup> Again, the monsters of the *Odyssey*

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<sup>311</sup> *Od.* 12.225-226.

<sup>312</sup> ἰχθύσι τοῖς ὀλίγοισι, *Od.* 12.252

<sup>313</sup> *Od.* 9.287-290. Rutherford (1992) 76.

often enact the diminution of the human to the animal and therefore realise the anxiety that perhaps the human was mere animal all along. The monsters' categorical hybridity threatens to infect and disrupt the stable humanity of Odysseus and his comrades.

Odysseus depicts the death of his companions at the mouths of Scylla as the apex of misery throughout his long sufferings:<sup>314</sup>

αὐτοῦ δ' εἰνὶ θύρησι κατήσθιε κεκληγοντας,  
χεῖρας ἐμοὶ ὀρέγοντας ἐν αἰνῇ δηϊοτῆτι·  
οἴκτιστον δὴ κείνο ἐμοῖς ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι  
πάντων ὅσσ' ἐμόγησα πόρους ἀλὸς ἐξερεινῶν. (*Od.* 12. 256-259)

Unlike when Odysseus could ultimately break out of the Cyclops' cave and enact vengeance on the destroyer of his men, Scylla reels Odysseus' companions into her cave, thereby leaving Odysseus without any opportunity to prevent their deaths or to injure her in vengeance. And although Odysseus stood on the foredeck of the ship, clad in armour, in order to catch sight of Scylla and potentially fight her, Scylla's violence catches the hero unaware, and continues in the realm of the unseen, within her cave – evoking and echoing the instances of blindness that haunted both Odysseus and Polyphemus in Book 9 of the *Odyssey*.

Odysseus' sensory expectations are here fully frustrated for the first time during his monstrous encounters. He is denied the sight of the monster in the crucial moment of violent intervention, and then denied the sight of her final destruction of his men. As we have seen, Odysseus' desires to eat Polyphemus' food, tussle with the Cyclops, and pronounce his identity are all enabled in Book 9 of the *Odyssey*; and the hero's desires for food, comfort, and erotic fulfillment are satisfied in the encounter between Odysseus and Circe. Acoustic and intellectual desire permeate the Sirenic narrative – though these desires are inevitably partially frustrated, since Odysseus cannot act on his will to go to the Sirens' meadow and continue listening to their song.

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<sup>314</sup> For Odysseus' language of pathos in these lines, see De Jong (1992) 5-6.

Scylla and Charybdis exemplify the issue of frightening yet frustrated desire to the greatest extent, as the episode is 'emphatically constructed as a narrative of unfulfilled desire' in Odysseus' narration.<sup>315</sup> Firstly, half of Scylla's body is obscured and made invisible by her cave. Thus her feminine body, with its excess of parts and its bestial violence, represents in monstrous surplus the female genital form, insofar as the cave suggests the female anatomy.<sup>316</sup> And secondly, although Scylla visually resembles a gaping feminine cavern, the bottom of her actual monstrous body, where her genitals might be located, is hidden and unavailable, just as were the Sirens' invisible and unseen bodies. Thus Scylla's body simultaneously represents the excess of desire that is summoned by the monster, as well as the denial of it. The type of mingling that Odysseus practiced with Circe is exaggerated in its impossibility here.

Charybdis, also gendered as feminine, embodies the force of the feminine and frightful sea itself, the natural and powerful whirlpool. She thereby stands in stark contrast to the world to which Odysseus seeks to regain access. If Odysseus mingled with and sank into Charybdis, he would ensure his own demise and his failure. The simultaneous threats and fears posed by this cluster of feminine monsters are all contrasting perversions of the virtuous, weaving, and weeping wife who awaits Odysseus in Ithaca.

Scylla and Charybdis demonstrate that the nonhuman and the monstrous cannot always be defeated by heroic wiles: there is a limit to the monster-mimicking power of the mortal Odysseus. There is something supranatural in this pair, with which the human is denied the possibility of mingling, other than in death. The hero must accept some form of death and failure, perhaps for him to remain anything but a god. Odysseus can contend with the monster, can become

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<sup>315</sup> Hopman (2012) 25.

<sup>316</sup> On the 'process and significance of Scylla's feminization' in classical Greece, see Hopman (2012) 91-174. See Schein (1995) 19 on the sexual menace posed by the various female monsters in Books 9-12.

momentarily monstrous; yet obstacles, which the mortal hero cannot overcome, must exist.

This sense of intractability is particularly resonant in the context of monsters whose existence predates that of the Olympian gods. As we have seen in Chapter 1 of this thesis, primordial monstrous powers occupy a sphere altogether different from the Olympian gods. As John Gould writes,

The Hesiodic succession myth ... asserts that the world has not always been under the control of the Olympians, and that even now, since divinity is indestructible, older and more primitive powers are in and of the world. It speaks of progress (progress whereby dark, anonymous, largely female collectives – the Moirai, Furies, Gorgons, Graiai, Phorkydes – have given way to the bright splendour of the Olympian gods), but also of the irrepressibility of these more primitive powers: the mindless violence of volcanic eruption is still a fact of human experience; the Fates and Furies have not left us; on the edge of things there are darker powers yet than the company of Zeus.<sup>317</sup>

The Hesiodic styling of Scylla,<sup>318</sup> like the Hesiodic succession myth itself, represents a realm of monstrosity that cannot be negotiated by means of *mētis* or by divine strategy. In Circe's warning that not even a god would be happy to come across Scylla (*Od.* 12.87-88),<sup>319</sup> the *Odyssey* reveals itself as a narrative that contains a spectrum of monsters that operate in different communities, landscapes, and cosmic orders, from the humanoid Polyphemus to the half-cliff, serpentine, roaring and yelping Scylla. Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey* stage a gradual move from monsters that can communicate with humans into monstrous forces that do not allow interchange, and which instead enact unilateral and inevitable violence.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Gould (1985) 25-26.

<sup>318</sup> See Chapter 2, 75 n. 173.

<sup>319</sup> Cf. *Od.* 5.73-74, where Calypso's Ogygia would stupefy even a god with wonder and pleasure.

<sup>320</sup> For the argument that these books stage a change of the hero (without changes in the monsters as well), see Brilliant (1995) 166.

## Conclusion

Odysseus' monstrous encounters began with Polyphemus, a being that so closely resembles the hero in many ways. Polyphemus engages in extended discourse with Odysseus and is described both in terms of monstrosity<sup>321</sup> and manhood.<sup>322</sup> This encounter is the only one in which Odysseus is able to devise his escape strategy entirely by his own wit. Although he loses six comrades, and despite the fact that his blinding of the Cyclops incurs the wrath of Poseidon, Odysseus exhibits pride at his performance of *mētis* in escaping from Polyphemus.<sup>323</sup> Of all the monsters in the *Odyssey*, the Cyclops' voice is the closest to human speech, and it is as a result of this that Odysseus can survive the monster by his own intellectual resources.<sup>324</sup>

It may seem as though Circe is the most humanoid interlocutor, but this is not the case when Odysseus and his men first arrive in Circe's land. After their arrival, it is the divine intervention of Hermes – not only with divine pharmacology but also with a divinely-named drug, *moly* – that enables the success of the discourse between Odysseus and the dread goddess.<sup>325</sup> Odysseus begins to 'speak' Circe's 'language', communicating his heroic power to her by use of drugs, and he does so with a drug whose name is unavailable in the mortal tongue. As Clay writes, '*Moly* and the *Planktai* remain nameless among men because they are unknown to mortals.'<sup>326</sup> Hermes, with his gift of *moly*, thereby enables Odysseus a temporary access to divine language,

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<sup>321</sup> πελώριος, *Od.* 9.187.

<sup>322</sup> ἀνήρ, *Od.* 9.187. Although Odysseus introduces Polyphemus as a godlike man in 9.187, he immediately thereafter describes him as a monstrous marvel and not at all like a man: καὶ γὰρ θαῦμα ἔτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἔφκει ἀνδρὶ γε σιτοφάγῳ (9.190-192). See Reinhardt (1996) 77-79 on the ways in which Odysseus' first-person narrative here amplifies the sense of marvel and wonder of the landscape in particular. Cf. Chapter 1, 54-56 on Hesiod's descriptions of Echidna as both godlike and completely unlike the gods.

<sup>323</sup> *Od.* 12.211-212.

<sup>324</sup> The relationship I posit is not a purely causal one: it is not merely *because* Polyphemus' voices is anthropomorphic that Odysseus can single-handedly evade the monster. Rather, it is the voice that reveals the monster's negotiability and that offers Odysseus the possibility of discourse, something which in turn offers Odysseus good opportunity to utilise his *mētis*.

<sup>325</sup> Cf. Segal (1968) 426 who argues that Odysseus' own human character is as much responsible for Circe's change as Hermes' drug is.

<sup>326</sup> Clay (1972) 128.

knowledge, and communication. These are the tools which enable him to develop a successful, productive relationship with Circe.

We know that Circe speaks in a human tongue, for Odysseus describes her in the first instance as Κίρκη ἐυπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεὸς αὐδήεσσα.<sup>327</sup> But we also know that she sings. Song is the first mode in which we hear Circe's voice. The dread goddess speaks both the language of gods and mortal Greek, and she furthermore enacts communication by means of divine magic. Odysseus can understand her, can learn from her words, but this discourse is only made possible by means of Hermes' gift, a sliver of divine language. Before the use of *moly*, Odysseus cannot access his *mētis* (*Od.* 10.193) and the lamenting men cannot access their *logos* (*Od.* 10.202).<sup>328</sup> And until Hermes intervenes on Odysseus' behalf, Circe speaks with enchantments and potions rather than with advice and prophecy. These are potions which would, if used on Odysseus, would annihilate his own capacity for speech – by transforming his body into that of an animal.

Odysseus' access to discursive exchanges with monsters decreases significantly after his departure from Circe's palace. Hopman persuasively describes the blockages in Odysseus' voice and speech-making capacity when the ship approaches the Sirens:

In Book 12, right before the Scylla tale, the Sirens narrative includes remarkably few instances of direct or indirect speech uttered by Odysseus. The episode is initially dominated by the 'windless calm' (12.168-9) that falls as the ship approaches the island and then by the Sirens' voices, whose 'clear-sounding song' (12.183) is first evoked by the narrator Odysseus (12.181-3) and later quoted in direct speech (12.184-91). By contrast, Odysseus and his men utter no articulate sound. Odysseus has preemptively cancelled out the power of his own words by putting wax in his companions' ears and ordering them to disobey should he implore them to set him free (12.160-4). Subsequently he gestures and nods rather than speaks to signify his desire to be released from his bonds (12.192-4). The men manage to escape, but it is due to a trick designed by Circe rather than Odysseus. The powerful voice of the Sirens takes away the performative

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<sup>327</sup> *Od.* 10.136.

<sup>328</sup> Hopman (2012) 43.

capacity of human speech.<sup>329</sup>

The Sirens episode is often considered one of Odysseus' great heroic successes, for he gains access to the deathly song of the Sirens. Yet although the Sirens episode represents a success on the level of the hero's appetite for superhuman sensory experience – for this appetite is partially, temporarily satisfied with Sirenic sound – Hopman's observations reveal that the episode functions as a failure of the hero's own voice. Where the prophetic voice of Circe designs the structure of Odysseus' behaviour, and where the Sirens sing the song of Odysseus, Odysseus himself is reduced to speechlessness and passivity: the inability to speak, and therefore to act.<sup>330</sup>

Hopman again usefully describes the soundscape of the Scylla narrative and the ways in which it amplifies the monstrous voice over the heroic. Indeed, the soundscape posed by Scylla and Charybdis, 'an awful combination of natural and inarticulate human sounds',<sup>331</sup> precludes the possibility of reply. The roaring, crashing, and thunder inevitably blot out any attempt of a human voice to distinguish itself in an act of speech. The fact that human wailing, groans, and shouting dominate the soundscape demonstrates one of the features of monstrosity we have also seen in this chapter: the monster's ability to reduce the human to something other than itself, particularly, the animal. Both Polyphemus and Scylla, in their book-ending gestures of anthropophagy, turn the human being into prey, revealing the fluidity with which the human can slide into the animal.

This slippage also develops on the sonic level, as the human soundscape is reduced to inarticulate expressions of anguish and pain. The only articulated word that is heard through the monstrous sounds is the name of Odysseus, cried out by Scylla's victims: ἐμὲ δὲ φθέγγοντο

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid., 43-44. See also Doherty (1995) 139 on Odysseus' inability to reply to the Sirens' song and the tension of Odysseus' narration of an encounter in which he could not himself vocalise.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 135 suggests a higher narrative autonomy to Odysseus, because his narration of Circe's own voice and designs 'deprives "her" account of the relative autonomy that Helens' tale of Odysseus retained.'

<sup>331</sup> Hopman (2012) 44.

καλεῦντες | ἐξονομακλήδην, τότε γ' ὕστατον, ἀχγύμενοι κῆρ (*Od.* 249-250). The exclamation of Odysseus' at the end of the Polyphemus episode (by Odysseus himself, as a boast) and at the end of the Scylla episode (by the dying comrades of Odysseus, as an invocation) demonstrates the sonic shift which has occurred throughout these monstrous encounters. Odysseus himself transforms from guileful vocalist into helpless listener; the exclamation 'Odysseus' transforms from a revelation of a trick to an unanswerable plea for help. Thus the voice lies at the heart of the story told by and about the monsters in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, and the relationship between the voice of the hero and the voice of the monster mirrors the broader relationship between these figures. The mode of monstrosity is in flux, and so is the hero's capacity for both vocal and behavioural response.<sup>332</sup>

The eventual vocal and physical insurmountability posed by Scylla and Charybdis is representative of the force that endows mythological monsters with their enchanting, fascinating force in the cultural imagination of the Greeks. We as readers who come across monsters in texts attempt to grapple with them: to figure out how their danger operates, what they signify, what they represent. We thereby become readerly personifications of Odysseus, as we engage in discursive interpretation of the monsters Odysseus meets. But just as Scylla and Charybdis disable Odysseus' powers of monstrous mimicry and negotiation, their presence in the *Odyssey* reminds the audience that the figure of the monster will always exist in a realm beyond legibility. The monster will always transcend comprehension, language, and the human conception of the cosmic world within and beyond the text. The Homeric monster continually provokes our desire to experience and comprehend the monster; and yet, the *Odyssey* also frustrates that desire which it itself provokes.

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<sup>332</sup> See Graziosi and Haubold (2005) on the changes and developments in the Homeric cosmos. See also Marinatos (2001).

## CHAPTER 3

### MONSTERS IN GREEK LYRIC POETRY: VOICES OF DEFEAT

‘Herakles was watching him, his eyes still as a pond. They watched each other,  
this odd pair.’

– Anne Carson<sup>333</sup>

#### Introduction

The literary life of the monster continues to develop in the lyric poetry of the seventh to the fifth centuries. Although lyric on the whole contains relatively few detailed representations of monsters in comparison with the other genres examined in this thesis, lyric monsters do in fact offer something unique within the Greek poetic tradition. This chapter explores the figure of the monster as represented in Stesichorus’ *Geryoneis* and Pindar’s *Pythian Odes* 1 and 12.

Although the works of these poets occupy very different narrative and stylistic realms, I group them together for two primary reasons. The first is due to their mutual identification with the open-ended genre that is lyric.<sup>334</sup> The second is a response to the fact that the monster figure in both Stesichorus and Pindar is characterised not in terms of the monster’s threat to the hero, but rather in terms of the hero’s effect on the monster. In both of these poets, these effects are manifest through the medium of the monster’s voice.

Lyric therefore offers a particularly rare perspective on the monster in Greek poetry. As we have seen in Chapter 1, Hesiod’s *Theogony* presents the monster primarily in terms of its effect on the cosmos. Chapter 2 explored the challenges that Polyphemus, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis pose to the Homeric hero Odysseus. The monster in Greek tragedy, as we will find in Chapters 4-5, is portrayed in terms of its effect on the *polis* and on the individual human self.

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<sup>333</sup> Carson (1998) 53.

<sup>334</sup> On the difficulties of generic definition in general and the definition of lyric in particular, see Swift (2010) 6-34; Budelmann (2009a); Calame (1998).

These claims about the focalisation of the monster's effects are generalisations, and therefore are not absolute: there are indeed instances where monsters' threats transcend these categories that I delineate here. However, this general mapping provides a framework for understanding the existential significance of the monster in each of the texts and traditions examined in this thesis. Extant Greek lyric poetry sets itself apart from these figurations of the monster, in that it presents a set of monsters who are characterised in terms of the impressions that heroes and opponents have made upon them.

The first section of this chapter is dedicated to the voice of Geryon in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*. The fragmentary nature of the *Geryoneis* limits our readings of Geryon and his opponent Heracles, but the arguments posed by this chapter respond to what is made available of these figures in the extant fragments. Despite the limitations, it is clear that Stesichorus' poem explores the ways in which an oncoming threat from a hero affects the monster psychologically. Geryon's deliberation about his own mortality and his decision to fight Heracles illustrate the presence and workings of the monster's subjectivity in response to the actions and behaviours of a hero. This subjectivity is enabled vividly through the poem's direct quotation of the monster's coherent and civilised voice. Stesichorus depicts a monster with a humanoid sensibility, whose voice utilises heroic rhetoric and sentiment. The absence of narrative attention to Geryon's impact on Heracles may well be due to the limited survival of the text; but the fragments of the *Geryoneis* that do remain portray the hero's impact on the monster rather than the monster's impact on the hero.

In Pindar's poetry, the role of the monster exists at a slight narrative remove when compared with the vivid Stesichorean presentation of Geryon. The figure of the monster in Pindar's poems regularly appears in a state of having-already-been-vanquished, rather than as a

threat or a problem within the narrative. Pindar's monsters therefore broadly function as trophies that celebrate the glory of the hero. The exceptions to this are Chiron and Pholos, who are Centaurs that are not descended from Ixion, and whose voices can even have ameliorative affects for the listener; the Centaurs that are descended from Ixion (and Centaurus), are in fact portrayed as socially transgressive and isolated monsters.

After brief consideration of Pindar's Centaurs, I then explore Pindar's depiction of the monstrous sounds that come from Typhon and the Gorgons in *Pythian* 1 and 12 respectively. I argue that Pindar's representation of monstrous sound offers a complement to that which we find in Stesichorus. Where Stesichorus presents the monster's voice in its anticipation of an encounter with the hero, Pindar presents the monster's voice in response to its own defeat by the hero. The crashing sounds of the subjugated Typhon and the lament of the immortal Gorgon sisters both resound in response to heroic deeds and violence. In Stesichorus and Pindar, we encounter a monstrous soundscape that is characterised, not by its impact upon the hero, but by the hero's impact upon the monster.

### **Part I: Stesichorus' *Geryoneis***

Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* offers one of Greek literature's most resonant incarnations of the monstrous voice, largely because it is one of the few extant Greek poems in which a monster speaks in direct quotation.<sup>335</sup> The *Geryoneis* originally contained at least 1300 lines,<sup>336</sup> delivered in a double-short lyric metre,<sup>337</sup> and it considers the tenth labour of Heracles. The *Geryoneis* gives

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<sup>335</sup> A second example of this is the direct quotation of Chiron's voice in Pind. *Pyth.* 9.35-65. Homer's *Odyssey* arguably gives other examples in Odysseus' accounts of the Cyclopes and the Sirens, but these are instances of the narrator quoting Odysseus quoting monsters rather than direct quotations of the monsters themselves. Hesiod's *Theogony* directly quotes the Hundred-hander Cottus at *Theog.* 655-63.

<sup>336</sup> There is indication of the 1300<sup>th</sup> line in the margin of fr. 25.36. Fragments of Stesichorus are here cited in the numeration of Finglass.

<sup>337</sup> Davies and Finglass (2014) 249-251; Haslam (1974).

uniquely detailed attention to the inner subjectivity of the monster and places Geryon in direct discourse with friends and family, rather than just in conversation with his heroic counterpart.<sup>338</sup> Monstrous voices typically appear in dialogue with, or aggression toward, some kind of hero, god, or opponent; and although Geryon's voice in the *Geryoneis* emerges in response to the oncoming threat of Heracles, the poem situates the monster in dialogue outside of the encounter proper.

Most of all, this poem is unique in the Greek poetic tradition for the meditations on monstrosity that are presented within the text. The *Geryoneis* is a poem whose envoicing of a monster serves not simply to reverse the audience's typical sympathies in the monster-hero encounter, but rather to complicate, and ask its reader to consider, the nature of that encounter. Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* probes the interaction between monstrous and heroic subjectivities and the larger cosmological questions posed by the figures of Heracles and Geryon.

In this chapter, I argue against the reading that the attribution of voice to Geryon results in a clear reversal of conventional sympathies, whereby the monster becomes the hero and the hero the monster.<sup>339</sup> Instead, the *Geryoneis* reveals certain ambiguities about the monster's semi-divine identity and depicts him as having a heroic and pathetic disposition. As far as we can tell from what remains, the *Geryoneis* presents a stealthy and silent Heracles, whose calculated feats of monstrous destruction inspire both wonderment and awe: the hero is powerful enough to reduce a three-bodied monster to the fragility of a drooping flower.

I argue that the sympathy that the poem applies to the monster is always matched by an endowment of admiration and awe for the heroic Heracles. The *Geryoneis* offers a portrait of monstrosity and heroism where the self-conscious yet confused monster is curious about but unaware of his own nature. Geryon wonders about his identity and categorical position in the same

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<sup>338</sup> His mother Callirrhoe, and a male figure who is probably the herdsman Menoites. See Barrett (2007a) 13-14.

<sup>339</sup> Franzen (2009) takes this stance. Cf. Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013).

way people are wont to do about monsters. Just as the figure of the monster baffles and challenges the human imagination, this monster functions as a source of existential confusion even to himself. The deliberation in which the *Geryoneis* partakes, in its extant form, concerns the actions and choices of the monster rather than the hero.

Heracles' actions are not granted the same deliberation: the fulfilment of Heracles' labour is not one of the questions posed by the poem as we have it.<sup>340</sup> The *Geryoneis* nevertheless presents a relationship between a monster and a hero who appear, in many ways, to function as doppelgangers. All the categorical confusion that Geryon experiences also applies to Heracles, and all the unknowns about his own role in the universe are shared by Heracles.

In what follows, I briefly discuss the place of the *Geryoneis* within Stesichorus' extant corpus. I then give a close-reading of Geryon's language in the passage referred to as 'Geryon's dilemma' and the poppy simile. I conclude by demonstrating the metaphysical kinship between Geryon and Heracles.

### **The *Geryoneis* in Context**

The plot of the *Geryoneis*, as it remains, includes the following events: fragment 8 describes Helios, the son of Hyperion, getting into his golden cup and Heracles going into a grove.<sup>341</sup> An unnamed group, perhaps Eurytion and his mother Erytheia,<sup>342</sup> arrive at a divine island where the Hesperides are located (fr. 10). Someone, presumably Menoites,<sup>343</sup> addresses Geryon, reminding him of his parents Callirrhoe and Chrysaor (fr. 13). In fr. 15, Geryon urges Menoites not to attempt

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<sup>340</sup> Fr. 19 includes Heracles' decision to fight Geryon by stealth, so the poem does include some small consideration of the hero's choices.

<sup>341</sup> On the cup of the Sun, see Davies and Finglass (2014) 236-238 and Barrett (2007a) 20-21.

<sup>342</sup> Davies and Finglass (2014) ad fr. 10.1-2.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., ad fr. 13; Barrett (2007a) 13-14.

to frighten him with a fear of death. This fragment contains ‘Geryon’s dilemma’, wherein Geryon says that if he is immortal, it is better to let Heracles continue with his labour unchallenged, but if Geryon is mortal, then he ought to fight rather than subject his progeny to shame and disgrace. Geryon states that he is the son of Chrysaor, and then expresses a hope that the gods not wish death or disgrace on him with regard to his cattle.

After this speech, fr. 16 features a speaker – presumably Callirrhoe, Geryon’s mother<sup>344</sup> – beseeching him and begging him to obey her. She continues her plea in fr. 17, with diction that has reminded many readers of Hecuba’s appeal to Hector in *Iliad* 22.79-89. She begins with a conditional, ‘if I ever offered my breast’, but the fragment does not include a complete apodosis. Athena then speaks to Zeus and urges him not to save Geryon from death, as he has promised (fr. 18). The narrative focalisation next switches to Heracles in fr. 19, where he determines to fight against Geryon by stealth. This fragment includes Geryon standing against Heracles in full armour (ἔ]χεν ἀσπίδα πρόσ[θ’, line 12). Heracles then strikes one of Geryon’s heads, presumably with a stone, and a helmet (τροφάλει’, line 16) falls from one of the heads of Geryon, creating a loud clattering noise. Heracles subsequently takes an arrow dipped in the venom of the slain Hydra, and shoots it through Geryon’s brow. This arrow, with ‘divine dispensation’ (δαίμονος αἴσα, lines 8-9) cuts through flesh and bone, covering Geryon’s armour with blood. Geryon is then likened to a poppy shedding its petals. Fragment 20 includes a second ambiguous object – perhaps a second head of Geryon – and a club, presumably Heracles’. The remaining fragments do not clarify any further plot matters: in fr. 22a, Heracles drinks something from a cup given to him by Pholos, the centaur.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Ibid.; Budelmann (forthcoming) ad 16.1-2 and 4-9; Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 250. Cf. Castellaneta (2005) 30-34, who takes Chrysaor as the speaker.

<sup>345</sup> On Heracles and Pholos, see Stafford (2012) 68-70.

Due to the loss of much of Stesichorus' poetry, we lack a sophisticated understanding of his poetic engagement with the figure of the monster and the depiction of voice in his other poems. We do know, however, that Stesichorus composed poems about several other monsters (including Cerberus and Scylla),<sup>346</sup> though all of these poems are lost.<sup>347</sup> We may also begin to make sense of the place of the speaking monster by reminding ourselves that Stesichorus' work frequently features direct quotation and dialogue. Geryon's direct speech does not therefore imply that the authorial voice sympathises unequivocally with the monster, since direct speech is typical of Stesichorus' poetry.<sup>348</sup> Of course, we may wonder what the voice of Geryon would have sounded like in early performances of the *Geryoneis*, and how the soundscape would have participated in the depiction of its monster. Was the quality and sound of Geryon's voice on the same aesthetic plane as the voices of other characters, or was this an opportunity to create a vocally-distinct character?<sup>349</sup> And how does this possibility for vocal coding in performance inform our understanding of and sympathy for the monster?

Unfortunately, we lack sufficient information about the poem's performance context to understand whether Geryon's voice itself would have sounded different from other Stesichorean voices. For example, the debate over whether Stesichorus' work was performed by a solo singer or by a chorus reveals the extent of scholarly ignorance about what vocal conditions might have accompanied early performances of the *Geryoneis*, much less the sonic of quality of Geryon's voice specifically.<sup>350</sup> Although we cannot draw conclusions about extra-linguistic sound effects,

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<sup>346</sup> See Davies and Finglass (2014) 155 and 459-461 on Cerberus; 162 and 512-514 on Scylla.

<sup>347</sup> Some of Stesichorus' monsters can be accounted for by the fact that he is known to have written four or more songs about Heracles. See Curtis (2011) x-xi and 21.

<sup>348</sup> Barrett (2007a) 4.

<sup>349</sup> For example, Jean Cocteau's 'Beast' character in *La Belle et la Bête* speaks with a radically distinct voice stylistically, sonically, and rhetorically. This difference in vocal register emphasises the Beast's status as outside the human sphere. And as the Beast becomes more and more acclimatised to human relationships, his voice changes.

<sup>350</sup> Budelmann (forthcoming); Burkert (1987); Carey (2015); Davies and Finglass (2014) 23-32; Power (2010) 234-243; West (1971); Willi (2008) 76-89.

the text does offer material through which we may consider monstrous language, phrasing, and metre.<sup>351</sup> Amidst all of the sonic unknowns and the vocal gaps that accompany this poem, we can at least see that Geryon's speech seems to fit normally within the metrical and therefore musical scheme: his metre is entirely standard within the poem, and there is no explicit difference encoded within the rhythm of his speech.<sup>352</sup>

This chapter attempts to treat the words of the monster, as well as the ways that other characters speak to the monster, as analytical resources in order to determine whether this voice is in any way distinct from Stesichorus' presentations of human or divine voices. I demonstrate that Geryon's voice somewhat surprisingly operates within heroic discourse and conveys heroic sentiments that will be familiar to readers of Homeric epic. I argue that Geryon's heroic voice participates in the poem's larger project of destabilising the borders between hero and monster. Indeed, Geryon's voice and speech are the primary means by which Stesichorus reveals that, in this particular monster-hero encounter, the monster and the hero are, in certain ways, interstitial twins. Both Geryon and Heracles possess levels of humanity but never fully embody it, and they define what it is to be human through their particular difference from it. In the case of Geryon and Heracles especially, though also visible in other monster-hero encounters, their difference from humanity – as well as their difference from animality and divinity – helps to define the human. Both Geryon and Heracles occupy a similar no-man's land of cosmological identity, and the *Geryoneis* uses the voice of the monster in particular to show that these extraordinary hybrid, masculine figures might in fact be parallels as well as opposites, kindred as well as enemy.

I will begin by examining the language in the speeches of Geryon in order to examine Geryon's manifestation of humanity or sympathy. Some scholars have taken the plot of the poem

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<sup>351</sup> Davies and Finglass (2014) 40-51.

<sup>352</sup> Curtis (2011) 53 on the dactylic metre and 55-56 on the steady and regular rhythm. See also Phillips (2013).

– e.g., the existence of a speech by Geryon and his mother, or the fact that Heracles seizes Geryon’s cattle and thereby commits an act of theft – as sole grounds on which the level of sympathy for the monster can be determined. These are insufficient grounds for such analysis. We must consider the poem’s language and larger themes concerning issues of cosmic order and justice in conjunction with the elements of the plot in order to more fully investigate the question of sympathy.

### The Monster in Dialogue

In what fragments remain, Geryon’s first speech is a response (ἀπαμ[ειβόμενος, fr. 15.2) to what Menoites has said about Heracles:<sup>353</sup>

χηρσὶν δ[υ—υ—υ—υ τὸν  
 δ’ ἀπαμ[ειβόμενος  
 ποτέφα [υ—υ Χρυσάορος ἀ-  
 θανάτοιο [υ—υ—υ—υ·  
 5 “μή μοι θά[νατον υ—υ—υ—  
 τα δεδίσκ[ε(ο) —υ—υ—  
 μηδε μελ[—υ—υ—υ—  
 αὶ μὲν γὰρ υ—υ ἀθάνατος υ—  
 μαι καὶ ἀγή[ραος —υ—υ—  
 10 ἐν Ὀλύμπ[ωι,  
 κρέσσον[υ—υ—υ—υ ἐ-  
 λεγγέα δ[—υ—υ—  
 καὶ τ[—υ—υ—υ—  
 κεραϊ[ζομεν —υ—υ—υ—  
 15 μετέρω[ν υ—υ—υ—  
 αὶ δ’ ὦ φί[λ(ε) —υ—υ—υ— γῆ-  
 ρας [ικ]έσθαι,  
 ζώ[ει]ν τ’ ἐν ἐ[παμερίοις]υ—  
 θε θ[ε]ῶν μακάρω[ν,  
 20 νῦν μοι πολλὸ κά[λλιον —υ—

<sup>353</sup> Barrett (2007a) identifies the character as Menoites. If Barrett is correct, Davies and Finglass (2014) 267 suggest that this would be preceded by Geryon announcing his will to fight Heracles followed by Menoites’ attempt at dissuasion (rather than Menoites’ attempting to dissuade Geryon before he has even asserted his intention to fight).



monster in a surprisingly human light. Through this conversation with Menoites, Geryon appears to have a social relationship with a human character who displays sympathy and companionship towards the monster. Geryon therefore distinguishes himself from the common monstrous characteristic of wholesale antagonism toward human beings.

Through Geryon's speech to Menoites, Stesichorus presents a world in which a monster can have human companionship and can experience fear as well as engender it. This adds to the complexity of the encounter between monster and hero. Furthermore, Barrett's supplement of κρυόεντα<sup>354</sup> – 'chilling'<sup>355</sup> or 'creepy'<sup>356</sup> – in lines 5-6 to describe Geryon's imagined experience of death emphasises the sensory experience of dying for the monster. Curtis prints κρυόεντα but notes that this word is not absolutely certain, since only the ending (-τα) remains.<sup>357</sup> An alternative to Barrett's κρυόεντα is Lazzeri's στονόεν]τα,<sup>358</sup> which still emphasises a sensory experience of death, albeit in a different way: the groaning death has a dual inflection, suggesting both the groan of the dying individual as well as the metaphysical groan of death itself.

Even if we accept neither Barrett's nor Lazzeri's supplements, to kill a monster is not a simple gesture of destruction without pathos: the monster undoubtedly demonstrates a self-conscious awareness of the experience of death. On the contrary, to kill a monster means to inflict a sensory experience of dying – perhaps one which can be described as 'chilly', 'creepy', or 'groaning.' Geryon characterises the prospect of death as a procedural sensory moment that reveals the monster's interiority through pain and fear.<sup>359</sup> Behind the encounter between Heracles and Geryon lie two

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<sup>354</sup> The phrase is particular to Geryon's speech and is not an epic formula.

<sup>355</sup> LSJ s.v. κρυόεις. Segal (1985) accepts this supplement in his analysis.

<sup>356</sup> *LfrgE* s.v. κρυόεις gives 'schaurig, grausig'.

<sup>357</sup> Curtis (2011) 121.

<sup>358</sup> Lazzeri (2008) 116. Davies and Finglass print only the ending (-τα).

<sup>359</sup> On pain in the death of Geryon, see Segal (1985) 195.

individual subjectivities, which in turn provoke readers to consider the psychology of the monster and the hero.

The sense of emotional interiority projected by Geryon in this speech makes a good case for Barrett's supplement, ἀγάνορα θυμόν (fr. 15.6). Page prints this supplement too, and although Davies and Finglass do not, they validate it as 'suitable.'<sup>360</sup> They also note that there is a possible alternative in τλήμονα θυμόν, 'enduring spirit.' This alternative still provides similar linguistic sense ('enduring' rather than 'proud') but lacks the epic formulaic echoes characteristic of Stesichorus' language. Although less formulaic, this phrase describes Odysseus at *Iliad* 5.670, when the hero sees the Achaeans carrying Tlepolemus out of battle and becomes enraged. Neither is printed by Curtis, who adds no supplement but in the commentary compares Hom. *Od.* 14.219, which includes the phrase, οὐ ποτέ μοι θάνατον προτιόσσετο θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ.

Barrett's supplement chimes with the simultaneously heroic and animalistic character of Geryon. Geryon's reference to his own ἀγάνορα θυμόν emphasises his own interiority, of which he is self-conscious, and to which he gives the adjectival descriptor ἀγάνορα. Ἀγήνωρ can convey 'Mut, heldenhafter oder kühner Sinn',<sup>361</sup> but can also carry a sense of 'headstrong, arrogant',<sup>362</sup> as seen when Apollo describes Achilles' anti-social and damaging hyper-masculinity in the *Iliad* (24.39-45).

Graziosi and Haubold's article dealing with this phrase reveals the complexity of the formula θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ throughout the *Iliad*.<sup>363</sup> Their important conclusions for the sake of this chapter are the following: first of all, that the possession of θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ in Homeric heroes is both a sign of a hyper-masculine, and even animalistic spirit, but the act of yielding to that θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ brings

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<sup>360</sup> Page (1973b); Davies and Finglass (2014) 271.

<sup>361</sup> *LfrgE* s.v. ἀγήνωρ, vol. 1, part 1.

<sup>362</sup> LSJ s.v. ἀγήνωρ.

<sup>363</sup> Graziosi and Haubold (2003).

socially problematic consequences for masculine martial communities in the *Iliad*.<sup>364</sup> Secondly, in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the use of this formula often occurs at moments wherein the θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ is managed and restrained for the good of the hero as well as his community.<sup>365</sup> And finally, when a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, or the sole adjective ἀγήνωρ, is applied to admirable Iliadic heroes as well as hubristic suitors, the word or phrase almost always conjures a sense of ‘excessive masculinity’<sup>366</sup> over this wide spectrum of referents.

Geryon’s likely use of the phrase θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ reveals that this monster has, in his own estimation, something which monsters do not typically possess in Greek literature: he has a *thumos*, and therefore should be considered psychologically akin to a heroic brand of humanity more than animality. This self-attribution of a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ reveals not only that Stesichorus’ Geryon considers himself within the established discourse of the hero rather than the monster, but also that he uses a heroic descriptor that betrays the very ambiguity of heroism: the hero always verges on lack of restraint and on violent excess, as does the monster.

Geryon’s use of θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, in other words, does not only demonstrate the heroism at work within the monster, but rather the true metaphysical kinship between monster and hero in this particular encounter. It is hard to imagine a more fitting monster than Geryon to represent this excessive kinship, since he is a monster who is physically composed of manly excess, with his tripled human body. The attribution of a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ to a monster may at first glance seem surprising, but it is only fitting that there is too much masculinity in the spirit of this creature, whose tripled body literalises the very metaphor. And if we follow Graziosi and Haubold in thinking that this formula is often, in Homer, used in moments when its heroic referent puts himself

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<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

in danger by yielding to his θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, then Geryon's speech (as supplemented by Barrett) bears a pathetic foreshadowing trace of his fate through the very associations of his language.

In the 'dilemma of Geryon' (fr. 15), Geryon's speech goes on to engage with the much-debated question of his mortality,<sup>367</sup> and how that should affect his decision to fight Heracles. Whether or not we take the view that Geryon must be aware of his own mortality (as does Rozokoki), we can still see that Geryon's speech reveals his own self-awareness. In Geryon's dilemma, the monster contemplates his cosmic place in the universe. Geryon's self-reflection reveals that he is aware of his categorical ambiguity due to his hybrid parentage.

Geryon's dilemma is placed directly before the hero-monster encounter, and therefore amplifies the ambiguity of heroism itself. Geryon's speech emphasises the metaphysical 'unknowns' regarding the relationship between hero and monster. Whether Geryon gives voice to a real, practical dilemma, or a metaphorical one, the effect is the same: a monster raises the question of his own interstitial status. In other words, whether Geryon truly does not know the status of his own mortality, or if he knows but rhetorically poses the 'dilemma' to accentuate the possibilities of the outcome and the righteousness of his choice, the text that remains gives us a monster thinking about what it means to exist in an ambiguous space on the continuum between man, animal, and god. And while the presence of monsters always poses these questions in the texts they occupy, it is rare for the monster himself – rather than the reader – to do the wondering.

An element of Geryon's speech that emphasises his humanity is his self-identification within a mortal genealogy, mentioning his potential children and descendants as well as his (probably) mortal father, Chrysaor.<sup>368</sup> The rules about hybrid offspring of mortal and immortal

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<sup>367</sup> See Davies and Finglass (2014) 272-273 on 15.8-24, for a discussion of the different stances on the issue. Cf. Barrett (2007a) 15, Barrett (2007b) 26-27, Page (1973b) 149-150, and Rozokoki (2009).

<sup>368</sup> On Chrysaor's mortality, see Chapter 1, 54-55 and Chapter 3, 139-140.

parents are not completely absolute – as exemplified in Hesiod’s *Theogony*.<sup>369</sup> Furthermore, as a result of the malleability of myth, there is further uncertainty as to whether Chrysaor himself is granted immortality in this version of the myth, with no Stesichorean text weighing in on Chrysaor’s mortal status. As a result, the issue of Geryon’s (im)mortality is reflected even in the textual criticism of the line 3-4 of fr. 15. Prest attaches ἀθάνατοι to Callirhoe alone, and Barrett attributes the word to both Chrysaor and Callirhoe;<sup>370</sup> Davies and Finglass come to the conclusion that it should not apply to Chrysaor.<sup>371</sup>

While Rozokoki finds it unfeasible that Geryon would be unaware of his own mortality, the issue of monstrous mortality is not nearly as unambiguous as she makes it seem.<sup>372</sup> Unlike mortal humans and immortal gods, monsters are neither universally mortal nor immortal, and their genealogies shed little light on the issue. Hesiod’s depiction of the mortal Chrysaor and immortal Pegasus – twin brothers – illustrates the ambiguity surrounding mortality that exists within Geryon’s own immediate family.

The Hesiodic genealogy of this particular family is furthermore full of irregularities. Although Davies and Finglass identify Pegasus as an ‘exception’,<sup>373</sup> so too might we identify his mother Medusa, since she is the only mortal Gorgon (Hes. *Th.* 277-278; Pindar *Pyth.* 12), which would imply that any genetic patterning of the mortality trait in this family tree is non-existent. In this case, and more broadly, monsters are exceptional by their very nature: their aberrance from regularity is part of what constitutes monstrosity.<sup>374</sup> Geryon’s uncertainty about the status of his mortality adds pathos to his monstrous existence. Through their hybridity, monsters in general

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<sup>369</sup> See Chapter 1, 53-55.

<sup>370</sup> Barrett (2007a) 12; Prest (1989).

<sup>371</sup> Davies and Finglass (2014) ad 15.3-4.

<sup>372</sup> Rozokoki (2008).

<sup>373</sup> Davies and Finglass (2014) ad 15.3-4.

<sup>374</sup> Of course, there are *species* of monsters, such as Centaurs, Sirens, Gorgons, Graiae, Erinyes, to name a few.

disrupt and call into question categorical certainty. Geryon's dilemma offers a meditation of this categorical disruption as applied to the nature of the self – Geryon's own self. Geryon experiences this uncertainty on a more personal level, in his own identity and its subsequent ambiguity for his own immediate future.

Regardless of where one stands on the specific implications of the conditions of Geryon's dilemma, it is clear that his speech frames him as an interstitial being. He invokes his possible connections on Mount Olympus (15.9-10) as well as his possible conventional, mortal offspring (15.22-24). Both utterances reorient Geryon within divine and human sociality: the emphasis on his *genos* has a 'naturalising' effect, as if Geryon might participate in normative mortal procreation.<sup>375</sup>

Other scholars have noted that the speech of Geryon's mother Callirhoe (16 and 17) imitates the speech of Hecuba in *Iliad* 22;<sup>376</sup> I suggest that this rhetoric thereby likens Geryon's family to a human one, and furthermore likens Geryon's struggle to the human struggle of Hector. The humanity of this family relationship is amplified both by Callirhoe's language and by its literary human antecedents in Hecuba and Hector. This family discourse, paired with Geryon's anticipation of possible offspring, seems to place him within a notably human, or at least non-monstrous, familial framework. This humanoid family life has the effect of overriding and distracting from Geryon's inherent monstrosity. His focus on potential offspring distracts us from the ambiguities that surround a monster's procreation, such as the form and cosmic function of his offspring. He bypasses the questions: If Geryon were to reproduce, would he beget winged, triple-bodied beings like himself? Or would his offspring take on completely unique forms, since the

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<sup>375</sup> This is not to suggest that monsters cannot procreate, but rather to suggest that Geryon's description of possible offspring seems notably human.

<sup>376</sup> Budelmann (forthcoming) ad 17; Kelly (2015) 37-39; Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 250.

distribution of physiognomies in his family line show little family resemblance? And what sort of animal, person, or god would be his mate? These questions demonstrate that the issue of monstrous procreation is hugely ambiguous, though Geryon treats it (in as much of his speech as we have) as quotidian enough not to require further elaboration.

What few words we have from Geryon all contribute to a highly elevated dramatisation of the relationship between monster and hero. I have attempted to show that Geryon's voice reveals the existential affinity between this particular monster and the heroic world. I have argued that Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* offers an entirely unique window into a monstrous subjectivity. This poem portrays a monster who himself exhibits the same kind of uncertainty about his place in the universe as he might summon in the reader of Stesichorus' text. I have attempted to treat Geryon's voice as the premiere site through which these metaphysical meditations on monstrosity are negotiated, noting that the voice of this monster has no discernible metrical, phraseological or rhetorical dissonance from the rest of the poem. Geryon's is not a sonically monstrous voice, but rather a voice that conjures sympathy, confusion, and complexity in a more profound way than seen elsewhere in monster and hero encounters in Greek poetry. This sympathy which Stesichorus cultivates for Geryon challenges the binary of hero and monster, but the voice of Geryon does not, as Christina Franzen has argued, simply reverse the monster and hero roles.<sup>377</sup>

Franzen argues that the envoicing of Geryon elevates the narrative of the 'loser' and transcends the basic privileging of the hero alone. This does not mean, however, that the extant text enacts a clean role reversal, just as the sympathy for Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* does not transform Odysseus into a monster and Polyphemus into a hero.<sup>378</sup> By giving voice to Geryon,

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<sup>377</sup> Franzen (2009); Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013); see also Page (1973b) 150, who takes the likeness to Sarpedon as part of Stesichorus' project of making Geryon 'a noble and sympathetic person', but does not claim that this is a simple hero-monster reversal. Cf. Segal (1985) 193-194.

<sup>378</sup> See Chapter 2, 82-94.

Stesichorus allows an interstitial being to speak about his own categorical liminality and consequent relationship to broad cosmological questions, which are of central thematic interest in the poem. It is true that Heracles is a complex hero who has monstrous qualities both here and elsewhere in Greek literature. He is capable of superhuman violence; he is, at a point, a sufferer of madness; he disrupts categories by behaving like man, animal, and god;<sup>379</sup> and here, he uses clever and subtle tactics to defeat his enemy, Geryon.<sup>380</sup> But these qualities are not amplified in the *Geryoneis* by its envoicing of the monster, nor by its (silent) representation of Heracles.

Geryon's use of heroic rhetoric and Heracles' violent behaviours are not the only features that connect these two and confuse the categories of monster and hero. What Michael Silk says of the tragic Heracles could equally be said of Geryon: he 'lies on the margins between human and divine; he occupies the no-man's-land that is also no-god's-land; he is a marginal, transitional or, better, interstitial figure.'<sup>381</sup> Indeed, several of the claims made so far about Geryon's existential identity can be equally and precisely applied to Heracles. Geryon may be triple-bodied, but Heracles' body is clothed in the lion skin, which depicts him as a visually hybrid body. Furthermore, Heracles wears a monstrous toolbelt: he carries a club<sup>382</sup> and uses the venomous blood of the Hydra against Geryon.<sup>383</sup> The use of the Hydra's poison on Heracles' arrows indicates that Heracles employs monstrous technology to enact violence, which sits in stark contrast to Geryon's conventionally heroic armour.<sup>384</sup> And just as Geryon's cosmic significance is ambiguous to the monster himself – he seems human at times, divine at times,<sup>385</sup> and animalistic at other

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<sup>379</sup> For discussion of these Heracleian qualities, see Chapter 5, 203-210.

<sup>380</sup> On these qualities of Heracles in tragedy, see Foley (1985) 149-205.

<sup>381</sup> Silk (1985) 5.

<sup>382</sup> See Chapter 2, 89-90 for the discussion of the club in *Od.* 9.

<sup>383</sup> See Chapter 5, 208-213 for discussion of the philtre in Soph. *Trach.*

<sup>384</sup> On the connotations of the bow and hoplite armour in combat, see Foley (1985) 169-175; Detienne (1968); Vidal-Naquet (1968); Bond (1981) ad 158; Galinsky (1972) 10-14.

<sup>385</sup> Cf. Pindar's characterisation of Heracles as divine in *Nem.* 3.22. On the semi-divinity of Heracles, see Stafford (2012) 171-197.

times – this is perhaps even more vividly the case for Heracles. Just as Silk claims that ‘the Heracles myth... is all contradiction itself’,<sup>386</sup> so too is the Geryon myth.

It is no surprise that the envoicing of monsters results in more categorical confusion than categorical clarification. Furthermore, it is useful to consider the relationship between content and form as concerns the *Geryoneis*. The formal muddling of rhetorical representation of monster and hero, rather than the simple reversal of the two roles, is actually quite fitting due to the general function of monsters in literary texts. Monsters resist, challenge, and problematise categories for the internal world of their narratives, and this often manifests itself through the linguistic and formal representation of monstrosity. Noussia-Fantuzzi points out that the similar depictions of Geryon and the Iliadic Hector add pathos to the monster by pointing out the fact that both characters suffer devastating deaths in their own homelands.<sup>387</sup> But Homeric overlaps, whether they are intertextual or merely formulaic,<sup>388</sup> are multifaceted in what they activate in audience response to the *Geryoneis*. Just as his links to Hector add pathos to Geryon, the overlaps with the Homeric Polyphemus serve an opposing function, to add monstrosity to Geryon.<sup>389</sup> Whether this connection speaks to the mythology of the Cyclops broadly or the Homeric episode specifically, there is a clear connection between Geryon and Polyphemus, and this connection adds a trace of monstrosity to Geryon.<sup>390</sup>

These two monsters share so much: Geryon is a master of cattle, where Polyphemus is a master of sheep and rams. They both have bodies of excess: Geryon is triple-bodied and

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<sup>386</sup> Silk (1985) 19.

<sup>387</sup> Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 251.

<sup>388</sup> See Kelly (2015) for the argument that Stesichorus gives the first purely intertextual engagement with Homer in Greek poetry.

<sup>389</sup> Polyphemus is the monster who is endowed with the greatest level of sympathy in the *Odyssey*. See Chapter 2, 83-95.

<sup>390</sup> Willi (2008) 94-97. See Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 242 on ‘the propensity towards moral complexity seen in Homeric epic’ regarding Hector and Polyphemus.

Polyphemus' is giant-bodied.<sup>391</sup> Both are envoked monsters whose homes are visited and attacked by a hero on a larger quest, and therefore their voices, speaking in response to the invasions, are where their humanity shines through. Both are related to Poseidon, and Polyphemus is Geryon's biological uncle. What we have of Geryon's speech very likely indicates that even he is unsure of his own mortality: he may talk like a man, and look like a monster, but attempting to fit him into one category or the other is problematic both for the audience of the poem and for the monster himself. Both Polyphemus and Geryon, through their metaphysical resemblance to the heroes they battle, demonstrate that the most thoroughly developed monster-hero encounters include heroes and monsters who resemble one another.

Despite all these thematic overlaps, the *Geryoneis* and the *Odyssey* focalise this semi-permeability between monster and hero somewhat differently. Whilst the account of Odysseus' encounter with Polyphemus in *Odyssey* 9 reveals the ways in which the Odyssean hero has to behave like the monster to survive his attacks,<sup>392</sup> Stesichorus' presentation of Geryon emphasises the ways in which the monster is akin to the hero.

### **The Death of Geryon**

The death of Geryon also offers insights into this creature's levels of monstrosity. The manner of his death simultaneously evokes pity for the monster and admiration for the hero. As we have already discussed, the slaughter of Geryon is not in fact Heracles' specific labour, but rather a consequence of the way in which the monster responds to Heracles' fulfilment of said labour: with honourable battle. This depiction of the hero's impact on the monster reminds Stesichorus' readers that behind the heroic feat there is a defeat; behind the human exploit is often an uncomfortable

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<sup>391</sup> Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 246.

<sup>392</sup> See Chapter 2.

and an uncertain price.

While the *pathos* attributed to Geryon demonstrates the humanity present in the monster, the manner of Geryon's death also exemplifies his monstrosity. The way in which Heracles devises to kill Geryon demonstrates that Geryon is an enemy whose defeat requires a certain level of violent effort, and his inability to kill Geryon by conventional means functions as a result of the monster's existential alterity.<sup>393</sup>

≈ — ≈ — ] πολὺ κέρδιον εἶν  
≈ — ≈ ]οντα λάθραι πολεμε[ῖν  
≈ — ≈ — ∪]κραταιῶι· (fr. 19.7-9)

The language reveals that Heracles' choice to engage with the monster by stealth is largely due to the strength and power of his opponent (κραταιῶι).<sup>394</sup> The poem thereby depicts Geryon both as a monster to be vanquished and as a powerful man to be battled.<sup>395</sup>

The poem's emphasis on Geryon's humanity notwithstanding, the means of Heracles' slaughter of Geryon emphasises Geryon's monstrosity. The metaphor of the arrow-heads reminds the reader of Geryon's multiplicity of heads, not otherwise signalled through the sounds of his voice.<sup>396</sup> And while Page claims that Heracles' application of the Hydra's poison to the arrow-head is 'excessive', it is clear that technology is important in the vanquishing of monsters.<sup>397</sup> The fact that Heracles must resort to supernatural technology to defeat Geryon adds to the sense that he is neither man, god, nor animal, but very much a monster, since basic human weapons would

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<sup>393</sup> This is also the case in Odysseus' survival of Polyphemus and the Sirens.

<sup>394</sup> On the role of cunning in heroic defeats of monsters, see Clare (1998).

<sup>395</sup> See Franzen (2009) 64 for the view that the decision to fight by stealth is part of Stesichorus' monstrous depiction of Heracles.

<sup>396</sup> Budelmann (forthcoming). See also Davies and Finglass (2014) 53-54.

<sup>397</sup> See Chapter 2 on Odysseus' use of technology in the vanquishing of monsters. Cf. the philtre from the centaur Nessus in Soph. *Trach.* 555-577, where Nessus' blood serves as poison because the centaur has himself been poisoned by Heracles' arrows dipped in Hydra blood. On Stesichorus' representation of technology and monsters, as compared with Homer and Hesiod, see Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 252.

not suffice in combat to defeat him:

- 10    υυ—εὐρ]ἄξ κατεφράζετ[ό] οἱ  
       ≡ — ≡ πι]κρὸν ὄλεθρον·  
       ≡ — ≡ — ἔ]χευ ἄσπίδα προσ[—  
       θ' υυ— — ]  
       ≡ — ≡ — ]ετο· τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ κρα-  
 15    τός (υ) — ≡ — ]  
       ≡ — ≡ [ιπ]πόκομος τρυφάλει·  
       ≡ — ≡ — υ] ἐπὶ ζαπέδωι.  
       ]ν μεγ [υυ— ] ρρνες ὠκυπετα[  
       ≡ — ≡ — υ] ν ἐχοίσαι  
 20    — ≡ — ]επ[ ]ἄξαν ἐπ[ι] χθόνα·  
       — ≡ — ]απε η κεφαλά χαρ[υ  
       — ≡ — υυ]ωσφα [ ]ε.. [

*desunt versus viii*

- 31    ≡ — ≡ — ≡ ]ων στυγε[ρ]οῦ                    str. 6  
       θανάτοι]ο τε [λος  
       κ]εφ[αλ]ᾶι πέρι [—υ] ἔχων, πεφορυ-  
       γ]μένος αἵματ[ι — ≡ — ],ι τε χολᾶι,  
       < ----- >  
 35    ὀλεσάνορος αἰολοδε[ίρ]ου                    ant.  
       ὀδύναισιν Ὑδρας· σιγαῖ δ' ὁ γ' ἐπι-  
       κλοπάδαν ἐνέρεισε μετώπωι·  
       διὰ δ' ἔσχισε σάρκα [καί] ῥ[στ]έα δαί-  
       μονος αἴσαι·  
 40    διὰ δ' ἀντικρὺ σχέθεν οἰ[σ]τὸς ἐπ' ἀ-  
       κροτάταν κορυφάγ·  
       ἐμίαινε δ' ἄρ' αἵματι πορφ[υρέωι  
       θώρακά τε καὶ βροτόεντ[α μέλεα  
       -----  
       ἀπέκλινε δ' ἄρ' αὐχένα Γαρ[υόνας                    ep.  
 45    ἐπικάρσιον, ὥς ὄκα μ[ά]κφ[ν  
       ἄ τε καταισχύνοισ' ἀπαλὸν [δέμας  
       αἴψ' ἀπὸ φύλλα βαλοῖσα γ[υ — ≡

(fr. 19.10-47)

The poppy simile has been written about at length, and one of the most common observations about

the simile is that it lends pathos to the dying monster.<sup>398</sup> However, the straightforward view of the simile overlooks the fact that the poppy simile also celebrates the hero and his means of violence. When Geryon, the mighty monster, crumbles like a flower, we witness the remarkable precision and success of the Hydra's poison and Heracles' execution. The neatness and silence (σιγᾶι, 19.36) of the hero is often overlooked in the poppy simile, largely because the attention is directed to the experience of the monster rather than the action of hero. The focalisation of the simile therefore functions not only to make the monster seem sympathetic, but also to portray the resourceful perfection of Heracles, who performs under divine dispensation (δαί- | μονος αἴσαι, 19.38-39).<sup>399</sup> Furthermore, Heracles' utilisation of the Hydra's poison directs our attention to the context of Heracles' labours, because it contextualises Geryon within a series of Heracles' monstrous foes – in particular, multi-headed monsters, like the Hydra.

The use of the Hydra's poison brings out Geryon's own resemblance to the Hydra, since he wields multiple heads and antagonises Heracles in his labours. Indeed, Geryon's death requires a remarkable range of methods of violence. But just as this fragment recalls that Geryon operates within a larger cast of monstrous characters defeated by Heracles, Geryon nevertheless remains radically different from other monsters. His difference is located around the site of the monster's heads: the part of the monstrous body where the Hydra's poison strikes, and where his intellect and voice reside. The fact that Heracles presumably has to use a different weapon for each head (he seems to take the first with a club and the second or third with the arrow) adds to the sense that this is a multifaceted creature. Heracles cannot attack Geryon in a uniform manner, but must stealthily and intellectually craft his attack (λάθραι πολεμεῖν, 19.8) to target each individual head.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Budelmann (forthcoming) ad fr. 19; Kelly (2015) 36-42; Noussia-Fantuzzi (2013) 237, 252; Franzen (2009) 71.

<sup>399</sup> Cf. Curtis (2011) 143, who thinks that the 'decreed fate' for Geryon 'may add pathos to the monster's plight.'

<sup>400</sup> Barrett (2007a) 19-20.

Geryon's vocal self-representation amplifies the 'human' aspects of his identity, and Heracles' method of killing Geryon in turn emphasises the strange monstrosity of the creature and the impressive agency and strategy of the hero. In giving voice to the monster, Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* offers a meditation on the nature of monstrosity itself, enacted through the medium of the monster's own voice.

We have seen that Books 9-12 of Homer's *Odyssey* portray a hero using his voice to narrate and ventriloquise his encounters with monsters. Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* instead uses the monster's own voice as a medium which reflects not only the monster's questions about his own ontological status, but also the impact of heroic ventures and violence upon the monster. Geryon's anthropomorphic subjectivity is broadcast by means of his humanoid voice. The ambiguous status of the hero's violence is articulated through the complex imagery of Geryon's death. In this way, Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* further develops the figure of the monster as established in *Odyssey* 9. Through the directly quoted voice of Geryon, Stesichorus' poem pushes the monster figure further into the realm of humanoid subjectivity, all the while retaining his monstrous alterity.

## **Part II: Vanquished Monsters in Pindar**

The lack of a strong generic coherence across the entire corpus of Greek lyric presents a challenge for this thesis, which attempts to examine the role of the monstrous voice within a range of literary genres. Where the monster provides much of the drama of the heroic narrative in Greek epic, and emerges as a representative of major social crises and threats in Greek tragedy, the monster in Greek lyric poetry fulfils a less obviously classifiable function – largely because Greek lyric itself remains a less easily classifiable genre. There are limits, therefore, to the arguments that can be made regarding the role and development of the monster figure in Greek lyric.

My argument here is built of observations from Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* and Pindar's *Pythian* 1, 2, 3, and 12. Although I identify a broad pattern across these works, I do not attempt to claim that lyric as a genre has a singular or cohesive presentation of the monster figure.<sup>401</sup> The loss of most of the *Geryoneis* furthermore prevents me from claiming that lyric *per se* emphasises the hero's impact on the monster. This, nonetheless, is what we find in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* and Pindar's various descriptions of monsters. There are, however, key differences in each poet's rendering of this impact: where Stesichorus emphasises the monster's subjectivity in anticipation of fighting the hero, Pindar emphasises the monster's subjectivity in response to defeat by the hero. The monstrous voice in Stesichorus is humanoid, linguistic, and sympathetic; but the monstrous voice that expresses the hero's impact is typically sonic, as Pindar presents a belching Typhon and lamenting Gorgons.

The focalisation on monster and hero also shifts in Pindar. The role of the monster is always secondary to that of the mythical hero (and secondary also to the particular victor of whom Pindar sings). While this aspect of contingency may be generally applicable to some degree in the function of most monsters in Greek literature – monsters, of course, most often emerge in their relation to their heroic or divine antagonists – Pindar's monsters serve specifically as rhetorical accessories

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<sup>401</sup> Examples of monsters in lyric poetry which are mentioned without detail include the following: Alcman fr. 1 and Pindar fr. 94b have Sirens; Alcman 56 refers to Argus, but only as Hermes' epithet as slayer of Argus; and Alcman 89 refers to sea monsters. Alcaeus makes frequent reference to pre-Olympian gods. Alcaeus 42 mentions Chiron. Pind. fr. 249c S-M mentions Cerberus and gives him one hundred heads, as opposed to the more usual three; and Cerberus also appears in Pind. frr. 70b, 249ab, 81 S-M, Pind. *Dith.* 2, and Bacchyl. 5.56-62. Pindar also mentions Amazons at *Ol.* 8.47, 13.87; *Nem.* 3.38; fr. 172.5, Centaurs at *Pyth.* 3.1, 3.45, 3.63, 4.102-103, 4.115, 9.29, 9.38 (some of which are discussed in this chapter); *Nem.* 3.48 and 53, 4.60; *Isth.* 8.41, a Cyclops at *Dith.* 1.6 and 'Cyclopean', fr. 169a.7, Geryon at *Isth.* 1.13, fr. 81.2, and 169a.6, Giants at *Pyth.* 8.17 and *Nem.* 1.67 and 7.90, Gorgons at *Dith.* 1.5, *Ol.* 13.63, *Pyth.* 10.46, and *Nem.* 10.4, Pegasus at *Ol.* 13.64; *Isth.* 7.44, Typhon at *Ol.* 4.7; *Pyth.* 8.16; fr. 93.2. Simonides 522 mentions Charybdis as a metaphor for oblivion. Simonides 595 mentions Sirens' voices, and 587 mentions Centaurs. In elegy, Theognis 173-178 mentions sea creatures, and Theognis 541-542 mentions Centaurs (as extinct). Xenophanes 1 refers to Centaurs and Giants as old fictions.

to the praise of the hero. In *Pythian* 1 and 12, a likeness between the mythical hero and the victor is implied, and so the destruction of the monster also constitutes the glory of the victor. Pindar's monsters therefore are not presented as threats or active participants within the drama of the epinician, but rather as trophies in celebratory recollection of the hero's might. Monsters comprise part of the story of the hero's power and superhuman accomplishments. This is unsurprising, due to the nature of epinician poetry, which serves to praise the excellence and accomplishments of the *laudandus*.<sup>402</sup>

Pindar therefore nestles the monster at a great remove from the narrative present of the poem. The monsters in his odes belong not only to the hero's own mythical past that predates the events described in the odes, but also to the mythical past that predates the present achievement of the victor. There is no immediacy to the monsters in Pindar's poetry, because these monsters serve as supplements to the mythic analogy to the victor's success. In this section, I describe the ways in which Pindar situates his monsters in a teleological framework, wherein the monster is described always in reference to its defeat. I discuss Pindar's use of myth in general,<sup>403</sup> followed by his depictions of Centaurs, Typhon, and the Gorgons.

Although Pindar's poetry engages with figures and narratives of myth, the act of bestowing the identity of monsters with complexity or power would conceivably detract from his mission of praising heroes. The less subjectivity and intricacy the monster possesses, the more straightforward the glory of the hero can be – and therefore the more unquestionable the praise of the victor can be, by association. We have seen how Geryon's depth of interiority in Stesichorus has served to complicate the role of the hero and to place the monster and the hero into a dialogue of

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<sup>402</sup> On the connection between the myths in Pindar and the victors, see Crotty (1982) and Bowra (1964) 278-316. Cf. Segal (1986) 130-131.

<sup>403</sup> Cf. Köhnken (1971).

metaphysical dyadism and moral ambiguity. Pindar's lyric is fundamentally engaged with human excellence and potential, which in turn invokes questions about the borders and limits of humanity as a category. In dealing with these questions, Pindar focuses more attention on the near-divinity and heroism of man – rather than, say, the animality of humankind, or the humanity of the gods – while always being careful not to step impiously too far in the valorisation of the human subject.<sup>404</sup>

### Centaurs

Centaurs function as one of the most frequently recurring types of monsters in Pindar, though their depictions throughout the *Odes* situate them in an unusual cosmic position.<sup>405</sup> Chiron appears in various odes (in particular *Pythian* 2, 3, and 9) as a wise creature who is endowed with subjectivity and who behaves as a benevolent friend to the gods.<sup>406</sup> Chiron here as elsewhere in Greek literature lacks one of the more frightening qualities of the monster figure generally, which is malevolence against humans or Olympian gods.

Still, I group centaurs within the collection of vocal monsters in Pindar for two reasons. First, centaurs are hybrid-bodied creatures. Secondly, *Pythian* 2.30-48 presents the emergence of centaurs as a portent directed toward humanity. The poet, after describing Ixion's transgression, characterises the emergence of Centaurs as a nonverbal message (*ἀγγελίαν*) to humanity.<sup>407</sup> In this instance, the connection between monstrosity and voice takes on a different inflection.<sup>408</sup> Pindar situates the figure

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<sup>404</sup> Griffith (2009); Currie (2005).

<sup>405</sup> See Chapter 3, 150 n. 400 for list of Centaur mentions in Pindar.

<sup>406</sup> See Halliwell (2008).

<sup>407</sup> See Bowra (1937) 21-22 for Ixion's transgressions as a metaphor for the dangers of ingratitude. See Goddard (1922) 104 for the message symbolised by the Centaurs.

<sup>408</sup> See Grimm (1962) 4-6 for discussion of the term *δάκος* in this poem and its monstrous associations elsewhere. Pindar's use of *δάκος* indicates that the more immediate, threatening monster is his slanderers, rather than a mythical beast.

of the Centaur itself as a message – in turn, a kind of voice – and thus depicts the monster as a means of communication in itself:

ἐν δ' ἀφύκτοισι γυιοπέδαις  
πεσῶν τὰν πολύκοινον ἀνεδέξατ' ἀγγελίαν.  
ἄνευ οἱ Χαρίτων τέκεν γόνον ὑπερφίαλον  
μόνα καὶ μόνον οὔτ' ἐν ἀν-  
δράσι γερασφόρον οὔτ' ἐν θεῶν νόμοις·  
τὸν ὀνύμαζε τράφοισα Κένταυρον, ὃς  
ἵπποισι Μαγνητίδεσσιν ἐμείγνυτ' ἐν Παλίου  
σφυροῖς, ἐκ δ' ἐγένοντο στρατός  
θαυμαστός, ἀμφοτέροις  
ὁμοῖοι τοκεῦσι, τὰ ματρόθεν μὲν  
κάτω, τὰ δ' ὕπερθε πατρός. (*Pyth.* 2.41-48)

Pindar's version of this myth presents a mind-boggling number of hybridities that begin even before this excerpt of the poem. The cloud that appears as the goddess Hera, through Zeus' trickery, represents a combination of divine and natural elements. It is not simply a cloud, for its intercourse with Ixion bears a child: Centaurus, whose exact existential identity is not articulated in the poem. Centaurus is characterised as socially and religiously transgressive, for he participates in unnatural couplings with mares and thereby engenders the race of centaurs.<sup>409</sup> The origin of the figure of the centaur is therefore always accompanied by a particularly monstrous serving of transgression and hybridity, even though Chiron behaves as a friend to man and god.<sup>410</sup> Centaurs' very existence, according to Pindar, is a portentous message, ἀγγελίαν, about transgression that bears traces of unnatural couplings and problematic desires: ἐν δ' ἀφύκτοισι γυιοπέδαις | πεσῶν τὰν πολύκοινον ἀνεδέξατ' ἀγγελίαν (*Pyth.* 2.41-42).

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<sup>409</sup> See Grimm (1962) on the themes of animals and hunting in *Pythian* 2. On how Centaurs' social transgressions place them in great contrast with humanity, see Gentili (1995) 50.

<sup>410</sup> Chiron is evidently the exception that proves the rule. See Gentili et al. (1995) ad 43 for discussion of the figure of the Centaur (though not Chiron) as a kind of double of Ixion: Centaurs and Ixion both become isolated from gods and mortals.

Unlike most monsters in the Greek mythological tradition, Chiron is benevolent and poses no threat to humanity. He is characterised simultaneously as a beast (φῆρ') and a source of healing in *Pythian 3*:

Ἦθελον Χείρωνά κε Φιλλυρίδαν,  
εἰ χρεῶν τοῦθ' ἀμετέρας ἀπὸ γλώσ-  
σας κοινὸν εὐξασθαι ἔπος,  
ζῶειν τὸν ἀποιχόμενον,  
Οὐρανίδα γόνον εὐρυμέδοντα Κρόνου,  
βάσσαισὶ τ' ἄρχειν Παλίου φῆρ' ἀγρότερον  
νόον ἔχοντ' ἀνδρῶν φίλον· οἷος ἐὼν θρέψεν ποτέ  
τέκτονα νωδυνίας  
ἡμερον γυιαρκέος Ἄσκλαπιόν,  
ἦρωα παντοδαπᾶν ἀλκτῆρα νούσων. (Pind. *Pyth.* 3.1-7)

This is a rare example of a human narrator wishing for the beneficence which a particular monster can bring to mankind. Gentili and colleagues point out that the positive characterisation of Chiron (and the Centaur Pholos) is due to the fact that they are not descended from Ixion.<sup>411</sup> Chiron's relationship with humankind stands in direct opposition to that of most monsters: he brings health and healing to humans, rather than harm and violence.<sup>412</sup> The text offers no indication that Chiron's voice sounds unique or special in any way. It possesses no features that suggest it is anything but fully humanoid in *Pyth.* 9.35-65, when Apollo consults Chiron about how to make romantic advances toward Cyrene (*Pyth.* 9.30-37). The god consults the monster and gleans wisdom from his speech, and thus Chiron enjoys a sociality unique in the monstrous canon.<sup>413</sup>

Chiron's voice serves as a further example of a broad trend across poetic depictions of monsters: the more cooperative a monster is within divine or human society, the more anthropomorphic and familiar the sounds of its voice. The human and divine realms can gain more than wisdom alone from Chiron's voice: it possesses magical healing powers in *Pythian 3*:

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<sup>411</sup> Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 2.43 and ad *Pyth.* 3.1.

<sup>412</sup> On the magical properties of music for healing, see West (1992) 31-33.

<sup>413</sup> Cf. the antisociality of Centaurs descended from Ixion, Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 2.43 and ad *Pyth.* 3.1.

τοὺς μὲν ὄν, ὅσσοι μόλον αὐτοφύτων  
ἐλκέων ξυνάονες, ἢ πολιῶ  
χαλκῶ μέλη τετρωμένοι  
ἢ χερμάδι τηλεβόλω,  
ἢ θερινῶ πυρὶ περθόμενοι δέμας ἢ  
χειμῶνι, λύσαις ἄλλον ἀλλοίων ἀχέων  
ἔξαγεν, τοὺς μὲν μαλακαῖς ἐπαιδαῖς ἀμφέπων,  
τοὺς δὲ προσανέα πί-  
νοντας, ἢ γυίοις περάπτων πάντοθεν  
φάρμακα, τοὺς δὲ τομαῖς ἔστασεν ὀρθούς. (*Pyth.* 3.47-53)

Unlike the magical female voices of Circe and the Sirens, which inflict physical harm on their listeners, the incantatory voice of Chiron does the opposite: it enacts healing.<sup>414</sup> Chiron's voice therefore serves as one aspect of his beneficence toward humankind, whether through his wisdom and teachings or through his incantations. Where Stesichorus' envoicing of Geryon presents its audience with a monstrous voice that troubles the boundaries of hero and monster, Pindar's presentation gives Chiron a voice that brings goodness to humans and gods.

### Gorgons

Pindar's *Pythian* 12 offers the most extensive treatment of monsters and their voices in Pindar's corpus. This treatment occurs in the only ode dedicated to a competitive musician, Midas of Acragas. The poem's narrator unfolds the mythic history of the instrument at which Midas so excels and tells the story of the hero Perseus and his divine overseer, Athena. The poem offers a drama of sight<sup>415</sup> and sound that unfolds in a series of relative clauses.<sup>416</sup> According to the singer, Athena invents the *aulos* in imitation of the lament of the Gorgons after the destruction of Medusa

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<sup>414</sup> Chiron's healing methods are those of Asclepius. *Ibid.*, ad *Pyth.* 3.51-3.

<sup>415</sup> Although the primary focus here is sound, it is worth noting that there is much in this ode that deals with sight, e.g. the implication of Medusa's deadly gaze and Perseus' blinding of the Graeae (*Pyth.* 12.13).

<sup>416</sup> On Pindar's chronologically backwards telling of myths, see Boyce (1974) 216. On the complexity of his style and syntax, see Pelliccia (2009) 254-255.

by Perseus.<sup>417</sup> Here Pindar offers another teleological perspective on the monster, giving a mythic account which starts at the chronological ‘end’ and moves in reverse, toward the ‘beginning’:

... τάν ποτε  
Παλλάς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν <Γοργόνων>  
οὔλιον θρηῖνον διαπλέξαισ' Ἀθάνα·  
  
τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπὸ τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς  
ἄϊε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέϊ σὺν καμάτῳ,  
Περσεὺς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄνυσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος  
ἐνναλία Σεριφῶ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων.  
ἦτοι τό τε θεσπέσιον Φόρκοι' ἀμαύρωσεν γένος,  
λυγρόν τ' ἔρανον Πολυδέκτα θῆκε ματρός τ' ἔμπεδον  
δουλοσύναν τό τ' ἀναγκαῖον λέχος,  
εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίσας

υἱὸς Δανάας, τὸν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ φαμέν αὐτορύτου  
ἔμμεναι. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων  
ἐρρύσατο παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,  
ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων  
χρῆμθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ' ἐρικλάγκταν γόον.  
εὔρεν θεός· ἀλλά μιν εὐροῖσ' ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,  
ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον,  
εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ' ἀγώνων,

λεπτοῦ διανισόμενον χαλκοῦ θ' ἄμὰ καὶ δονάκων,  
τοὶ παρὰ καλλίχορον ναίοισι πόλιν Χαρίτων  
Καφισίδος ἐν τεμένει, πιστοὶ χορευτᾶν μάρτυρες.  
εἰ δέ τις ὄλβος ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, ἄνευ καμάτου  
οὐ φαίνεται· (Pyth. 12.6-29)

Pindar's narrator indicates that Athena created the *aulos* by weaving the dirge of Medusa's sisters, who are wailing in response to Perseus' victory, as he takes the head of Medusa to Seriphus.<sup>418</sup> The poem tells of Athena's sonic invention in two separate but interconnected ways, in lines 6-12 and again at lines 18-27.<sup>419</sup> The first account loosely describes how Athena – noted elsewhere in Pindar

<sup>417</sup> On the performance context of *Pythian* 12 and the likelihood that the *aulos* was used, see Phillips (2013). See Connor (2014) 34-36 on theories of the voice as a wind instrument and as a stringed instrument. On the other mythic traditions surrounding the invention of the *aulos*, see Frontisi-Ducroux (1994) 242.

<sup>418</sup> See Köhnken (1976).

<sup>419</sup> On Pindar and musical innovation generally, see Prauscello (2012). For the Athena and Marsyas version of the *aulos' aition*, cf. *PMG* 758 and 805; see also Leclercq-Neveu (1989).

for her own striking vocalisations (Pind. *Ol.* 6.36-37) – invented the *aulos*, by imitating the sound of the Gorgons’ lament. The second details why: in order to create an instrument for mortals that mimics monstrous lament. Pindar does not comment upon precisely why Athena conceived this as a fitting gift to mortals, but does describe the effect the *aulos* has on mortals: its sound functions as a reminder of contests (μναστῆρ’ ἀγώνων, *Pyth.* 12.24).<sup>420</sup>

The narrator’s doubled description of Athena’s mimicry has led to a range of interpretations of what constitutes the precise soundscape that is being imitated and translated.<sup>421</sup> The scholarly debate revolves around the question of whether the sound Athena imitates includes only the voices of the lamenting Gorgons, or this sound in combination with Perseus’ shouting<sup>422</sup> – implied by the verb ἄσεν in line 11.<sup>423</sup> Gentili does not print Race’s ἄσεν, but rather ἄνυσεν, and therefore Perseus’ shout is not considered as part of the soundscape. The implications of whether the *aulos* is imitative of pure Gorgon lament, or instead lament mixed with heroic victory shout, are not without significance for this chapter. The semiotic sound effect of the instrument changes whether we consider the *aulos* as a translation of monstrous voice alone, or as a translation of monstrous lament mingled with heroic victory cry. Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to pursue this point in great detail, I share the view of Held, Gentili, and Steiner, who argue that the sound of the *aulos* imitates solely the Gorgons, rather than Gorgons and Perseus collectively.<sup>424</sup> This point can be made even if we adopt Race’s ἄσεν over Gentili’s ἄνυσεν. Clay and Segal, on the

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<sup>420</sup> Segal (1998) 85 compares Athena’s invention here to her role in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*, where she also neutralises the power of feminine monsters (the Erinyes) and transforms it into a manageable resource for the *polis*. For scholarship that situates Pindar’s *Pythian* 11 as a response to Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*, see Finglass (2007) 11-17, Herington (1985), Phillips (2016), and Robbins (1986). On the role of the divine in human achievement, see Crotty (1982) 13-14.

<sup>421</sup> On the multiple levels of mimicry at work in the poem, see Phillips (2013) 43, Schlesinger (1968), and Segal (1998).

<sup>422</sup> Clay (1992), Held (1998), Segal (1995), Steiner (2013).

<sup>423</sup> Köhnken (1978) 92 takes ἄσεν and τρίτον together to indicate a third cry from the hero to Athena.

<sup>424</sup> Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 12.9-10; Held (1998); Steiner (2013).

other hand, contend that the verb διαπλέκω requires multiple objects, and thus argue that Athena must be interweaving multiple and distinct substances together, including the shout of Perseus.<sup>425</sup>

There are two reasons why I am convinced that the sound imitated by Athena imitates comes from the Gorgons alone. The first is rooted in the temporality of the narrative. Although the myth is told in a nearly backwards chronology that in some ways disorganises the elements of the mythic plot, the lines that detail the Gorgons' lamenting situates their mourning song in response to Perseus' shout. The narrator makes <Γοργόνων> | οὔλιον θρῆνον the direct object of διαπλέξαισ', then qualifies this *thrēnos* with the following relative clause, detailing the activity of the sound:

τὸν παρθενίους ὑπὸ τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς  
ἄϊε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέϊ σὺν καμάτῳ (*Pyth.* 12.9-10)

The narrator then details Perseus' triumphal shout with a ὅποτε, which indicates that the lamenting occurred when Perseus released the shout and carried the Gorgon's head:

Περσεὺς ὅποτε τρίτον ἄνυσεν κασιγνητῶν μέρος  
ἐνναλία Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων. (*Pyth.* 12.11-12)

So the chronology unfolds: when Perseus shouted and carried the head, the Gorgon sisters let flow a dirge from their snaky heads, which Athena mimicked in her invention of the *aulos*. Although the two sounds occur in close chronology, the text gives no indication that Perseus' shout is included in the sounds interwoven by Athena.

The second is that the sounds contained within the οὔλιον θρῆνον are sufficiently plural to constitute the 'inter'-weaving implied by διαπλέξαισ'.<sup>426</sup> The Gorgons in their extensive sound and

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<sup>425</sup> Clay (1992); Segal (1995).

<sup>426</sup> Gerber (1986) points out 'the unceasing nature of lamentation' when he chooses to translate οὔλιον as 'oft-repeated' in preference to Köhnken's (1971) 136, 'verderblich.' Although it is not a popularly accepted translation of οὔλιον, it nevertheless suggests a plurality and repetition within the sounds generated by the Gorgons. Slater (1969) gives 'deadly' as his sole translation of οὔλιος. Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 12.6-8 argue against both translations and offer instead 'triste' and 'funereo'. Gentili and Luisi (1995) 8 also take the view that Athena imitates the sound of the Gorgon sisters without the shout of Perseus.

in their dual number<sup>427</sup> can adequately account for the prefix δια- attached to διαπλέξαισ'. We may even imagine an element of serpentine whistling and hissing, since the narrator notes the Gorgons' snaky heads. As Steiner points out, the sense of ὑπό plus the dative often indicates musical accompaniment in the fifth century (παρθενίοις ὑπό τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς, line 9). Steiner's reading takes the snakes as 'ophidian antiphonists' to the Gorgons' lament.<sup>428</sup> Gentili also reads the passage as indicating that the *thrēnos* come from Gorgons and snakes (presumably those attached to their heads) in combination.<sup>429</sup> This adds a layer of polyphony to the soundscape that can easily accommodate διαπλέξαισ' without the additional input of Perseus' shout. The likelihood of the *aulos*' sound imitating the Gorgons alone is strengthened by the fact that the second description of Athena's sonic invention (*Pyth.* 12.18-27) mentions only the goddess' imitation of the Gorgons, without any indication of Perseus' shout. The depiction of Euryale associates her lamenting voice with human femininity and her jaws with serpentine quickness (ἐκ καρπαλιμῶν γενύων, *Pyth.* 12.20). Thus the Gorgons' maidenly-serpentine hybridity accommodates the *aulos*' capacity for a tremendous range of sounds (πάμφωνον, *Pyth.* 12.19), without the need for Perseus' shout woven into the instrument's sonic range.

Still, Perseus' shout constitutes an important part of the poem's soundscape. A great sonic and emotional dissonance emerges between the mournful and monstrous sounds made by the Gorgons and the triumphant and heroic shout made by Perseus.<sup>430</sup> Both of these sounds indicate that the monster, Medusa, exists in a state of already-having-been-defeated for the duration of her

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<sup>427</sup> Segal (1998) seems to take the imitated sound as the death cry of Medusa herself, but the text indicates that it is her mourning sisters' lament rather than her dying cry. See also Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 12.9-10.

<sup>428</sup> See also Phillips (2013) 41 on the scholia to *Pythian* 12, which strengthens Steiner's argument. Race's (2014) translation of 12.9 leaves ambiguity as to whether the singer describes the Gorgons' heads as covered with snakes or instead characterises the Gorgons as snakes themselves: 'from under the unapproachable / snaky heads of the maidens', but his translation is at odds with Steiner's reading of ὑπό.

<sup>429</sup> Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 12.9-10.

<sup>430</sup> On oppositions and contrasts in *Pythian* 12, see Schlesinger (1968) 283. On the possible performance soundscape of the poem, see Phillips (2013).

presence within the text. This monster is marked for the impact the hero has on her – death – and on her monstrous sisters – lament. The sound of the defeated monster’s monstrous sisters constitutes the *aulos*’ particular sonic potential.<sup>431</sup> Thus monsters and their voices in Pindar serve to fill out the resumé of the hero and amplify his glory. For Midas in particular, the monster and its sound constitute the very medium through which he – with Perseus as a mythic intermediary – gains his victory.

The lament of the Gorgon sisters participates in the larger trend we find in extant Greek lyric representations of monsters. This time, however, the monstrous voice expresses the suffering of monsters in response to a hero’s violence against *another* monster (rather than themselves), since the Gorgons who mourn are not those against whom the hero fought. Perseus’ violence against Medusa causes her kindred monsters to suffer and to express that suffering vocally. The lament of the Gorgon sisters reveals a subjectivity charged with pain and anguish, and also indicates a sense of monstrous sociality and family. Geryon, the Centaurs, and the Gorgons all operate within broader and more thoroughly detailed anthropomorphic social communities than do the monsters represented in Hesiod and Homer. Geryon is situated firmly within social discourse between friends and family; Chiron is a helper to both the divine and human realms. The Gorgons also participate in somewhat recognisable social communities, as they demonstrate familial care and ritual mourning for their lost sister Medusa. Their family ties are also invoked in the mention of their sisters, the Graiae (*Pyth.* 12.13). But when we move from Geryon, Centaurs, and Gorgons to Typhon – the most anti-Olympian monster in the cosmos – we find a counter to this trend.

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<sup>431</sup> On divine benevolence and Athena’s transformation of a toxic monster into a source of goodness for humans, see Gentili (1995) 312.

## Typhon

When Typhon is introduced in Pindar's *Pythian* 1, he emerges as an example of a particular category of beings: those whom Zeus does not love and who, as a result, shudder at the sound of the lyre.<sup>432</sup> Pindar begins his ode with an address to the lyre itself (Χρυσέα φόρμιγξ, *Pyth.* 1.1), and goes on to describe the ameliorating effects that its music has on the gods – namely Zeus and Ares – and other nonhuman entities, including thunderbolts and eagles (*Pyth.* 1.5-6).<sup>433</sup> Those who participate in the maintenance of Olympian order are pleased and calmed by hearing this music, but those who in some way resist the reign of Zeus feel the opposite effect at the sound that emerges from the lyre and which is associated with the Muses.

Typhon is introduced first and foremost as a creature who is distraught by the sounds of the lyre.<sup>434</sup> His second identifying feature is his subjugation by Zeus in Tartarus. His initial characterisation is therefore constructed in terms of the effects of Zeus' antagonism. Next he is identified by his hundred heads, his former occupation of the Cilician cave, and then the conditions of his subjugation:

ὄσσα δὲ μὴ πεφίληκε Ζεὺς, ἀτύζονται βοᾶν  
Περίδων ἄϊοντα,  
γᾶν τε καὶ πόντον κατ' ἀμαιμάκετον,  
ὅς τ' ἐν αἰνᾷ Ταρτάρῳ κεῖται, θεῶν πολέμιος,  
Τυφῶς ἑκατοντακάρανος· τὸν ποτε  
Κιλικίον θρέψεν πολυώνυμον ἄντρον· νῦν γε μάν  
ταί θ' ὑπὲρ Κύμας ἀλιερκέες ὄχθαι  
Σικελία τ' αὐτοῦ πιάζει  
στέρνα λαχνάεντα· κίων δ' οὐρανία συνέχει,  
νιφόεσσ' Αἴτνα, πάνετεσ  
χιόνος ὄξειας τιθήνα·  
τᾶς ἐρεῦγονται μὲν ἀπλάτου πυρὸς ἀγνόταται

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<sup>432</sup> For other depictions of Typhon in Pindar, always as Zeus' adversary, see *Ol.* 4.6-7, *Pyth.* 8.15-18, and fr. 92. See Schoder (1943) 406 for the images of harmony in the poem (and how Typhon stands outside of them).

<sup>433</sup> On Zeus' association with the eagle, see Mylonas (1946).

<sup>434</sup> See also Pindar *Pyth.* 1.95-98 (nearly the end of the ode) on Phalaris, who is pointedly not welcomed by the sound of lyres for his impiety. See Mess and Usener (1901) for discussion of the relationship between Pindar's and Aeschylus' Typhon.

ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί· ποταμοὶ  
 δ' ἀμέραισιν μὲν προχέοντι ῥόον καπνοῦ  
 αἶθων'· ἀλλ' ἐν ὄρφναισιν πέτρας  
 φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλόξ ἐς βαθεῖ-  
 αν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺν πατάγῳ.  
 κεῖνο δ' Ἀφαίστοιο κρουνοῦς ἐρπετόν  
 δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμ-  
 πει· τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον προσιδέ-  
 σθαι, θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι,  
 οἷον Αἴτνας ἐν μελαμφύλλοις δέδεταί κορυφαῖς  
 καὶ πέδῳ, στρωμνὰ δὲ χαράσ-  
 σοισ' ἅπαν νῶτον ποτικεκλιμένον κεντεῖ. (*Pyth.* 1.13-28)

*Pythian* 1 thus offers a vivid representation of the sonic coding of the cosmos.<sup>435</sup> Throughout this thesis I have argued that the sound of the monster illustrates its position in the cosmic order, and *Pythian* 1 presents a precise complement to this pattern. In addition to coding the beings of the universe according to the sounds they make, *Pythian* 1 opens by coding the beings of the universe according to the way in which they respond to sounds.<sup>436</sup> The polarising sounds of the lyre bring pleasure to those aligned with Olympian order and dread to those who in any way oppose Zeus' reign.<sup>437</sup>

Pindar's Typhon is a monster who demonstrates the ways in which the particular impact of sound on monsters situates them within the cosmos. This element of sonic impression on the monster is also complemented by his sonic expression. Belching out fire (ἐρεῦγονται) which in turn rolls rocks into the sea with a great crashing din (πατάγῳ), Typhon generates a cacophonous and overwhelming soundscape that in itself functions as a portent (τέρας). This monster's emissions

<sup>435</sup> See Schoder (1943) 407.

<sup>436</sup> See Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 1.13 on the force of βοάν as suggestive of the war cry, and on the extremity of the terror implied by ἀτύζονται.

<sup>437</sup> See Schlesinger (1968) 283, who points out that Pindar's presentation of 'subjektive Werturteile' in *Pyth.* 12 serves to show a range of opposing responses to the same event.

are in themselves monstrous, functioning as both a visual and sonic marvel (τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον προσιδέ- | σθαι θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι).<sup>438</sup>

The depiction of Typhon's emissions as θαῦμα... ἀκοῦσαι recalls Hesiod's Typhonomachy (834), where nearly the same phrase is used to describe the multitude of voices issued from Typhon's hundred serpentine heads.<sup>439</sup> Zoe Stamatopoulou argues that Pindar's depiction of Typhon in *Pyth.* 1 engages directly with Hesiod's Typhon in the *Theogony* – though in her close textual analyses of the two poems, she does not note this verbal echo.<sup>440</sup> Typhon is the only figure in extant Greek poetry who is described as a sonic marvel, so the double attribution of this description to Typhon is particularly striking. There is, of course, a semantic difference in Hesiod's use of the phrase θαῦμα ἀκοῦσαι (834) and Pindar's θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι. Where Hesiod describes the myriad different sounds issued from Typhon's hundred mouths as a marvel to hear, Pindar emphasises the belching volcanic explosions as a marvel to hear (about), *from* those present, παρεόντων, rather than from the monster himself.<sup>441</sup> So where the Hesiodic Typhon presents a purely sonic marvel, the Pindaric Typhon is marvellous to hear *about* from his witnesses.

Once again, Pindar places his monsters at a further remove than does Hesiod. Hesiod's audience marvels at Typhon himself, whereas Pindar's audience marvels to hear about Typhon from those who witness his explosions. Where Hesiod's Typhon is a live threat, and where the *Theogony* stages the conflict between Zeus and Typhon in action, Pindar's Typhon is a vanquished monster whose story is told only in terms of defeat. Pindar emphasises not only the aftermath of Typhon's defeat, but also the ways in which Zeus has made an impact upon the monster. Hesiod's Typhon

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<sup>438</sup> See Introduction, 23-31 on the term *teras* as connected to monsters.

<sup>439</sup> Cf. Bowra (1964) 476-478 and Gentili (1995) 13 for a discussion of the relationship between the depictions of Typhon in *Pyth.* 1 and in Aesch. *P.V.* 351-372.

<sup>440</sup> Stamatopoulou (2008) 63-79. Cf. Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 1.26.

<sup>441</sup> Gentili et al. (1995) ad *Pyth.* 1.26.

sends innumerable voices out of his many mouths which signify nothing but chaos. Pindar's Typhon, by contrast, sends out the cacophony of explosion from one volcanic mouth, which in turn acts as a sign (τέρας) of the defeat of Typhon and the victory of Zeus. Typhon's voice in *Pythian* 1 expresses not the mayhem of his precursor, but the impact of the god's victory over the monster.

As we have seen, the challenges presented by the lyric as a genre make it difficult to generalise about a particularly 'lyric' take on the monster and its sounds. The evidence of monsters that we do have, however, shows a striking pattern: the monster is characterised not in terms of its impact on the human or divine worlds, but rather by its own experience of human or divine antagonism. The subjugation of Typhon in *Pythian* 1 and the mourning of the Gorgon sisters in *Pythian* 12 together situate the monster in terms of their responses to the assaults of Zeus and Perseus respectively. Chiron sits outside of this pattern, and that is because he is not a threat to the divine or human worlds; he cannot be characterised in terms of their negative effects upon him, because he engages in a different mode of relation to the heroic and divine realms.

We have moved through a continuum of vocal monsters, from the eminently humanoid Geryon, to the wise Chiron, the lamenting Gorgons, and the belching Typhon. This continuum illustrates once again the larger argument of this thesis, which is that the quality of the sounds made by a monster reflects its individual position within the cosmos. The participants in this continuum have also demonstrated the ways in which the monstrous voice expresses the nature of the violence committed by gods and heroes upon monsters. Lyric thus engages the monstrous voice in a manner that presents an ethically complex take on the monster figure; and in so doing, lyric invites its audience to *hear* the ways in which the heroic and divine worlds antagonise the figure of the monster.

## CHAPTER 4

### CENTRIPETAL MONSTERS IN AESCHYLUS' *PROMETHEUS BOUND* AND *ORESTEIA*

'What came in from outside? What came out from within?' – Ruth Padel

#### Introduction

At first glance, Greek tragedy may appear an unlikely genre in which to go monster-hunting; for when one surveys the cast of characters that occupy the Athenian tragic stage, relatively few monsters of the mythological sort step forward.<sup>442</sup> Tragedy yields only a few 'real' monsters, partly as a result of the difficulties of persuasively staging them, and partly because many tragedies take place outside of monstrous temporalities and geographies.

More significantly, however, the monsters in tragedy are few because here the monstrous is translated and accommodated within the metaphorical plane. In other words, the qualities belonging to the figure of the monster in archaic Greek literature – including excess, hybridity crossing of boundaries, daimonic presence, and violence – are represented by and transposed into the plot, characters, and aesthetics of the tragic genre. Indeed, here the characteristic features of the monster emerge in the actions and crises of the tragic hero situated *within* a civilised world, rather than in the traditional antagonistic hero-monster encounters, as we have seen in epic and lyric poetry. The monstrous encounters that in other genres opened an exploration of the delineation between human and nonhuman are now refigured as the tragic characters' encounters with their own internal nonhumanity.<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> Tragedy regularly stages nonhuman characters, including gods and ghosts, but rarely stages the mythological monsters that appear elsewhere in Greek poetry. The monsters which take the stage in extant Aeschylean tragedy include the Erinyes' in *Eumenides* and Io in *Prometheus Bound*. Most monsters are confined to Messenger speeches (the sea-bull in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, the monsters vanquished by Heracles in Euripides' *Heracles*). Offstage monsters who are briefly mentioned by onstage characters are not the subject of this chapter. For rhetorical and metaphorical use of monsters in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, see Campbell (1935).

<sup>443</sup> See Chapters 1-3.

This argument is stretched across two separate chapters on Greek tragedy, and the function of this first chapter on Greek tragedy is to listen to the voices of the mythological monsters that do in fact resonate onstage. This chapter argues for a reading of Greek tragedy that places vocal sound at the centre of the genre, suggesting not only that the voice is absolutely crucial to the theatrical experience of Greek tragedy, but also that it comprises a major component of tragedy's generic identity. I emphasise sound because tragedy's transformation of literal monstrosity into figurative traits can be *heard* in the soundscapes of the plays examined here.

After arguing more broadly that the voice needs to be read as a crucial phenomenological component of tragedy, I then introduce the mythological monsters that do in fact appear on the tragic stage. I give special focus to the voices of Io in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*<sup>444</sup> and the Erinyes in *Eumenides*.<sup>445</sup> The primary purpose of these readings is to explore the instances of monstrous sound and noise-making in their staged forms in Greek tragedy. I argue that the internal worlds of these plays require that these sounds – despite their horror – must be heard, and cannot be simply avoided, in service of the establishment of cosmic and political order. The integration of the monster into the human realm, and the resulting domestication of the monster, are essential to the tragedies examined here; and, as will become clear, that integration can be mapped lucidly through the medium of voice.<sup>446</sup> I argue that Io and the Erinyes demonstrate through their voices

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<sup>444</sup> Although the authenticity of this play is highly disputed (see Griffith [1977]), I still consider *Prometheus Bound* together with the *Oresteia* because both works offer complementary representations of sound and monstrosity. This complementarity is not taken to indicate the play's authenticity, but rather to offer a useful counterpoint to other depictions of sound and monstrosity in Greek tragedy. See Scott (1984) 176 for the musical aspects of the *P.V.* that are sometimes Aeschylean and at other times un-Aeschylean.

<sup>445</sup> See Solmsen (1937) on the Erinyes in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*.

<sup>446</sup> I should signal at this stage that 'domestication' does not necessarily indicate dissolution of threat; instead, by 'domestication', I am referring to a process by which the monster becomes a domestic presence, whether occupying the space of the home or of the human body. Easterling (2008) 233 resists the notion of the domestication of the Erinyes: '[W]e must note that the Furies are not going to be neutralised or imprisoned, nor are they going to be domesticated or sanitised. They can continue to be generated by any individual or collective wrongdoing and will contribute to new acts of madness if provoked. Nor will they be rejuvenated or beautified.' Cf. Brown (1984) 275, who writes that the Eumenides are 'tamed' by Athena. I maintain that they are 'domesticated' – not in the sense of 'sanitised' or disempowered – with regard to their integration into the civilised space. Indeed, their initial wildness

the fact that, in Greek tragedy, the monster presents a threat within and to the civilised world. The monster therefore poses a problem whose solution is integration into that world. Greek tragedy's version of the monster resides within the city, and often inside the tragic characters themselves, always threatening to erupt into and infect the social world.

### **The Centrality of the Tragic Voice**

The performance, expression, and manipulation of the human voice all lie at the core of the generic identity of Greek tragedy. The voices of actors and individual characters within the theatre functioned as unique sites of power for their audiences, not only as a consequence of the predominantly oral nature of ancient Greek literary engagement, but also due to the highly musical nature of tragic performance.<sup>447</sup> Edith Hall argues that classicists, following the 'performative turn' in classical scholarship, should consider the voice as central to the theatrical spectacle:

Although it is fashionable to stress that the ancient Greek and Latin words for a theatrical audience (*theatai, spectatores*) prioritized the act of watching, many ancient authors acknowledge the importance of the aural impact of drama on the 'spectator.'<sup>448</sup>

The tragic voice was indeed part of a 'theatre of highly rhythmical, recited or chanted text',<sup>449</sup> and even the visual elements of the performance, like the tragic mask in fifth-century Athenian performance, have been thought to participate in the careful manipulation of the voice.<sup>450</sup> The importance of the actor's vocal capability is further exemplified by the fact that Sophocles himself resigned from his acting career as a result of his 'weak voice.'<sup>451</sup> Thus the tragic performing voice

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emerges largely as a result of their autonomy and lack of cooperation with Olympian order; their gradual integration resolves this aspect that makes them monstrous rather than divine.

<sup>447</sup> Hall (2002); Wilson (2002) 39.

<sup>448</sup> Hall (2002) 4.

<sup>449</sup> Vovolis (2003) 73.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 76. For argument against the acoustic function of the mask, see Meineck (2011) 120.

<sup>451</sup> *TrGF* 4.

should be understood as musical rather than merely rhetorical, sonic rather than merely verbal, and it also must be regarded as central to the aesthetic experience of the performance.

Nicole Loraux posits a reading of tragedy that regards the voice as essential to the genre, emphasising the centrality of choral voice, the musicality of the play, and ‘the *phonē* at the expense of the *logos*.’<sup>452</sup> Loraux figures tragic song as not necessarily linked to ‘actual singing’,<sup>453</sup> but rather a product of the perpetual, everlasting strain of lament that rings out within and from tragedy itself: a metaphysical song that is ushered onto the stage and enacted by the physical instrument of the voice. Treating ‘mourning as music’, Loraux demonstrates that the voice, and in particular, the threnodic voice,<sup>454</sup> permeates the generic fabric of tragedy.<sup>455</sup>

### **Monsters Onstage:**

#### **The Emergence of Io**

Aeschylus’ Io is never explicitly described as a *teras* or a *pelōr*, and she is not portrayed as malevolent or dangerous. Yet still, Io is the hybrid creature par excellence in Greek tragedy. She is the daughter of the river Inachos, and therefore innately hybrid before her metamorphosis; after which, she attains a fully hybrid body, representing both woman and cow. This body functions as a signifier for the monstrous consequences of Zeus’ power.

Prometheus and Io are linked, not only in their victimhood at the hands of Zeus, and not only because Io’s descendant Heracles ultimately liberates Prometheus: they also are both victims

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<sup>452</sup> Pucci in Loraux (2002) ix.

<sup>453</sup> Loraux (2002) 67.

<sup>454</sup> For a discussion of the different mourning terminologies, see Dué (2006).

<sup>455</sup> Cf. Swift (2010) on *threnos* as its own genre. For other vocally-oriented readings of tragedy, especially on the role and power of the lamenting voice in the genre, see Alexiou (2002), Caraveli (1986), Caraveli-Chaves (1980), Dué (2006), (2012), Foley (1993), (2001), Holst-Warhaft (1992), and Suter (2008). On the heroic voice and soundscape in tragedy, see Nooter (2012). On voice and gender both within and outside of tragedy, see Carson (1995). On dance as part of the tragic soundscape, see Wiles (1997) 90-91 and Henrichs (1994).

of invasions within their own bodies. Prometheus' body is transformed into an incessant wound, into both sustenance and environment for an eagle, and in this sense his divine body also accommodates invasive animal elements. So too Io's body is made home not only to her human subjectivity but also to bovine features; she too is pursued by the gadfly, which causes both physical and mental agony.<sup>456</sup> Both Prometheus' and Io's bodies therefore represent transgressions that are linked to Zeus, albeit in different ways. The sight of Io provokes horror in the Chorus, who sing of the importance of marrying within existential categories (*P.V.* 887-893) and describe how the visual impact of Io's presence tells a story of ontological confusion and terror:

ταρβῶ γὰρ ἄστεργάνορα παρθενίαν  
εἰσορῶσ' Ἴοῦς ἀμαλαπτομένην  
δυσπλάνοις Ἥρας ἀλατείαις ὕπο. (*P.V.* 898-900)

Io's voice is a match for her body: her agitated entrance in *Prometheus Bound* offers tremendous contrast to the consistent dactylo-epitritic second stasimon that precedes it both in metrical pace and in theme.<sup>457</sup>

Where lines 526-560 feature the Chorus' reflections on Prometheus' responsibility for his own fate, Io's frenzied emergence forces the Chorus and the audience to consider that human innocence can still result in embodied monstrosity. This crisis is especially amplified in the condition of a cosmically early mortal character, and it renders Io abrasive both sonically and conceptually.<sup>458</sup> When she enters the stage, she moves from marching anapaests to a host of astroptic lyric combinations of iambs, bacchiacs, trochaics, dochmiacs, and cretics. The

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<sup>456</sup> White (2001) 120. For the *oistros* and its connections with poison, snakes, and dogs in tragedy, see Padel (1992) 118-125. On the sounds of the gadfly and the verb *σπρίζειν* in *P.V.*, see Haldane (1965) 35. On Io's madness, see Mattes (1970) 75-78, O'Brien-Moore (1924) 86-92, and Padel (1995) 14-17 and 217-218.

<sup>457</sup> Cf. Scott (1984). See also Holmes (2010) 235 on Io's embodied symptoms of madness and the 'manifestation of divine power' on the mortal bodies of tragic characters, and also Holmes (2010) 237 for symptoms as a way of staging 'encounters between gods and humans.'

<sup>458</sup> On Prometheus' role in the development of mankind through the arts, see Conacher (1977).

dochmiacs in particular mark her agitation.<sup>459</sup> Mark Griffith remarks, ‘Mad, ignorant, and powerless, she is a suitable representative of the human race.’<sup>460</sup> Yet in the half-human half-animal feminine body, Io functions less as a representative and more as a metaphorical representation of the human condition at this cosmic moment. Io is a human being whose victimisation by the gods situates her in a body that is simultaneously human and animal. Whilst her body accommodates the incommensurability of human and subhuman, her voice stitches together a jarring (albeit virtuosic) sonic hybridity, both in metrical and sonic categories.

With great urgency, Io disrupts the soundscape established by the Chorus of Oceanids with the energetic marching anapaests (a metre typical of tragic entrance).<sup>461</sup> William Scott describes Io’s outburst as emblematic of her suffering rather than her character:

Here, because Io is being brought onstage only for one scene as another sufferer, the musical development presents the degree of her suffering rather than her character. When Io leaves the stage, she departs to cries, screams, and lyric anapaests. The movement from song to speech to song is appropriate, for Prometheus’ counsel has really provided no remedy for her pains.<sup>462</sup>

Yet Io’s suffering and her embodied monstrosity are linked: her suffering is itself represented by and manifest in her newly metamorphosed monstrous body. Io’s vocal multiplicity of course does reveal an emotional state, but it also serves as a reflection of the monster she has become. Her suffering *is* her character, and both her suffering and her character are located in her monstrosity.

Io’s voice is described with terms that denote both human and animal sounds, such as κράζω and φθέγμα.<sup>463</sup> This indicates that the sounds coming from her mouth are not necessarily exclusively human. She floods the stage with blunt questioning and progressively agonised

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<sup>459</sup> Rutherford (2012) 35-36.

<sup>460</sup> Griffith (1983a) 194.

<sup>461</sup> In the *P.V.* alone, 284ff., 877ff., 1040ff. contain anapaestic entrances.

<sup>462</sup> Scott (1984) 175.

<sup>463</sup> *P.V.* 472, 588. Φθέγμα is Io’s description of her own voice.

confusion, represented in the abrasive anaphoric and shapeshifting repetition of τίς and the cumulative alliterative dentals:

τίς γῆ; τί γένος; τίνα φῶ λεύσσειν  
τόνδε χαλινοῖς ἐν πετρίνοισιν  
χειμαζόμενον;  
τίνος ἀμπλακίας ποινάς ὀλέκηι; (*P.V.* 560-563)

Io's diction and sounds exemplify the marked contrast between Prometheus' boundedness and her profound wandering, between his confinement and her boundary-disruption.<sup>464</sup> In body and in voice, Io represents incarnations of monstrosity that exist elsewhere in ancient literature: the hybrid form, on the one hand, and the monster whose origination occurs through misfortune on the other.<sup>465</sup> Io's monstrosity more specifically results from conflict related to Zeus.

The *Prometheus Bound* therefore depicts Io as a very human character who is pathetically imbued with the monstrous. Io's monstrous metamorphosis takes place in a temporal and cosmic realm where monsters bear a more immediate presence than they do in other Greek tragedies.<sup>466</sup> The characters onstage in *Prometheus Bound* include the primordial god Oceanus and of course the Titan god Prometheus; Prometheus in turn speaks of the monster Typhon, who is the greatest threat to cosmic order.<sup>467</sup> Prometheus compares his own fate at the hands of Zeus to Typhon's, noting that Typhon's subjugation by Zeus will be followed by an eventual volcanic eruption from Typhon's seething rage (*P.V.* 351-376) – those whom Zeus oppresses, conceals, and binds, Prometheus seems to threaten, can still enact violence; the story is not yet over.<sup>468</sup> Indeed, as

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<sup>464</sup> Cf. Conacher (1980) 57 and Taplin (1977b) 266-267. On the contrast between the staging of Prometheus and the Oceanids, see Scott (1987) 86.

<sup>465</sup> This is a form of hybrid-bodied monster most vividly represented in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (in depictions of the Sirens, Scylla, and Io, for example), and is less common in Greek literature, whose primordial monsters are usually born as such rather than metamorphosed.

<sup>466</sup> White (2001) 111.

<sup>467</sup> See Chapter 1, 61-67 and Chapter 3, 160-164. On Prometheus' Titan genealogy and associations, see Parry (1992) 74.

<sup>468</sup> On the different shades of Zeus' personality across Aeschylus' plays, see Todd (1925) and Winnington-Ingram (1933) 101.

Friedrich Solmsen notes, this sympathetic depiction of Typhon attempts to suggest that ‘the “fire” of rebellion is still smoldering. Zeus’ victory has not secured real peace for the world.’<sup>469</sup>

Prometheus’ invocation of Typhon indicates that the play is set in a world whose characters exist in a primordial era, wherein hybrid creatures fill the earth.<sup>470</sup> Prometheus himself has been witness to the defeat of Typhon, and Io too will witness many monsters on her wanderings, including Gorgons, griffins, and Graiae.<sup>471</sup> Prometheus himself presently poses a threat to the world that Zeus is trying to order and control. Prometheus possesses the monstrous trait of excess, with his large and mighty Titan body, as well as the trait of supernatural ability, with his technological genius, which in turn serves to disrupt ontological categories.<sup>472</sup> Indeed, Hephaestus describes Prometheus as a transgressor, a god who fails to revere gods, and who gives mortals things which they should not have (*P.V.* 29-30).<sup>473</sup> Prometheus therefore embodies an aspect of divinity that is incommensurable with the ordering and plan of Zeus – a disposition which casts him in a monstrous light. This Promethean monstrosity is amplified by his possible self-identification with, or at least professed pity for, Typhon (*P.V.* 351-352).<sup>474</sup>

Thus in the *Prometheus Bound* there exists a thoroughly imagined network of nonhuman beings – from Typhon to the Oceanids, Prometheus to Io – which reveals that the play offers its own continuum of monstrosity that has nearly everything to do with Zeus. These nonhuman creatures all take on monstrous aspects through their respective relationships with Zeus. Typhon

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<sup>469</sup> Solmsen (1949) 132.

<sup>470</sup> See Lloyd-Jones (2003) 51-52 on the different depictions of Prometheus in Hesiod’s *Theogony* and Aeschylus’ *P.V.*

<sup>471</sup> *P.V.* 793-807. Cf. White (2001) 111-118 on the world of the play as a brutish one, ‘devoid of the sacred and humane’, with a developed notion of the *mortal*, βροτός, rather than of the human being. For the play’s emphasis on its monstrous geographical orientation, see *P.V.* 1-2, 19-22. It is also worthwhile to note the emphatically visual, silent description that Prometheus gives of the monsters: he characterises the Gorgons as: ἄς θνητὸς οὐδεὶς εἰσιδὼν ἔξει πνοάς (*P.V.* 800), and griffins as ἀκραγεῖς (*P.V.* 803).

<sup>472</sup> For the Chorus’ remarks about the importance of the maintenance of categories, see *P.V.* 887-893.

<sup>473</sup> See White (2001) 114.

<sup>474</sup> Cf. Hesiod’s Typhonomachy at *Theog.* 820-852.

is the ur-monster of ancient cosmogony precisely because he is Zeus' main opponent, who threatens to overtake Zeus as the king of the universe. Prometheus, as a Titan, is similarly cast as a character whom Zeus must subdue in order to concretise his sovereignty. Io's body undergoes monstrous metamorphosis because of Zeus' wish to hide her from Hera, and her social identity becomes that of the outcast because of Hera's rage.<sup>475</sup>

The *Prometheus Bound* takes as one of its central themes the exploration of the Olympian god exercising his power in the realms of the primordial, of the divine, and of the human. Zeus exercises this power on Prometheus, whose engagement with mortals makes the boundaries between divine power and human power far too porous; and he exercises it upon Io, who is Zeus' most pronounced victim in this story. Zeus' relationship to these monstrous beings is mapped through time. Typhon's subjugation lies in the past; Prometheus' in the present; and Io's continues on into the future, until her wanderings finally cease. Indeed, Io is made a monster by Zeus, watched by the monster Argos at the behest of Hera, maddened and racked to the edge of her humanity by the divinely issued gadfly, and orientated in her wanderings by the monstrous Prometheus. This disfiguration of the human, subjected to divine will, is dramatised particularly through Io's voice. Her speech reveals what happens to the human voice when the body undergoes monstrous metamorphosis, when the animal and the human intersect in one body, when the human is helplessly moved into the sphere of the bestial through divine means – and still experiences human anguish and confusion.

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<sup>475</sup> Conacher (1980) 56 references 'the obvious parallel between Prometheus and Io as fellow victims of Zeus' tyranny: one the victim of Zeus' enmity, the other of Zeus' love.' On the emphasis on Zeus' role rather than Hera's in Io's suffering, see Conacher (1980) 60. On the ultimate reconciliation of these characters with Zeus, see Griffith (1983a) 189-190. White (2001) argues that Zeus' deeds are justified, but that sympathy for both Prometheus and Io is still possible as well. On the relationship between the Oceanids and Zeus, see Scott (1987) 88-89.

## The Departure of Io

Hesiod's *Theogony*, which portrays the conflict between Zeus and Prometheus, presents a cosmos under development, where gods and monsters establish their place in the universe through their relationships with one another. Homer's *Odyssey*, as we saw in Chapter 2, gives particular focus on the way in which the hero experiences the sensory manifestations of monsters and also behaves in ways that are imitative of the monsters he encounters. The poetry of Stesichorus and Pindar considered in Chapter 3 broadly emphasise the expressive powers of monsters' voices in response to the violent effects gods and heroes have upon them. In *Prometheus Bound*, we find an even further development of the textual presentation of the monster. Zeus' main adversary, Typhon, fades into the background, while the monstrous Titan Prometheus takes centre stage; so too does the mortal Io, who is not innately monstrous but becomes so as a casualty of Zeus' sexual appetite and Hera's wrath.

Io's is a voice that reveals, both in its language and its frenzied metre, the agony of finding oneself metamorphosed from human to monster. Besieged at one turn by the monster Argus, and later by the incessant gadfly, Io is lost, both geographically and existentially. The nonhuman takes residence in her body, and her voice expresses the confusion and anguish which results from the monstrous invasion into her human form. In her cries and her questions, Io's voice careens out of control and into madness as she exits the stage:

έλελεῦ έλελεῦ·  
ὕπό μ' αὖ σφάκελος καὶ φρενοπλήγες  
μανίαί θάλπους', οἴστρου δ' ἄρδις  
χρίει μ' ἄπυρος,  
κραδία δὲ φόβωι φρένα λακτίζει,  
τροχοδινεῖται δ' ὄμμαθ' ἑλίγδην,  
ἔξω δὲ δρόμου φέρομαι λύσσης  
πνεύματι μάργωι γλώσσης ἀκρατής,  
θολεροὶ δὲ λόγοι παίουσ' εἰκῆι  
στυγνῆς πρὸς κύμασιν ἄτης. (P.V. 877-86)

With a body invaded by alien features, Io finds that her mind too is occupied by a violent madness through the assault of the gadfly. Io's newfound monstrosity, her exhaustive journeying, and her physical victimisation all result in a tongue that slides out of her control. As Io exits the stage, her voice delivers a dissolution of agency between the human subject and her voice. Unable to control her own tongue, Io's foul words (θολεροι... λογοι) take on a violent force (παίουσ'), themselves cooperating with the assaults of the gadfly and the burning madness that serve as the pulse of her ruin.

### **The Changing Song of the Erinyes**

Aeschylus' *Eumenides* offers the most engaged example of monstrous voices on the tragic stage. Not only does the play include a highly anticipated chorus of monsters,<sup>476</sup> but it also grants the Erinyes a self-conscious meditation on the force of their own voices in their binding song: Aeschylus presents vocal monsters singing about their monstrous voices.<sup>477</sup> In addition to the Erinyes' descriptions of their voices, the play contains a wealth of reactions to the Erinyes from the characters within the drama. These responses give further insight into the phenomenology of monstrous sound, demonstrating what hearing monstrous sound *does* to tragic characters. Furthermore, the voices of the Erinyes can be heard throughout the *Oresteia* – even when the particular Chorus of Eumenides is not on the stage – through a series of narrative descriptions of sounds which are all unified in their dreamlike qualities and the interpretive challenges they pose.

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<sup>476</sup> This is not to suggest that the onstage appearance of the Erinyes was unsurprising, but rather that the soundscape has been building up to their appearance. The story in the *Life* §9 suggests that the staging of the Erinyes, and more specifically their introduction in ones and twos, brought about great physiological consequences for the audience, such as fainting and miscarriage. See Easterling (2008) 222 on the fact that the *thauma* of their appearance is mingled with an awareness that these actors will emerge onstage as satyrs in the satyr play. See Rutherford (2012) 122 on this chorus as a metaphor become reality. See also Lebeck (1971) 131-132 on the representation of the chorus as transitioning from verbal to visual.

<sup>477</sup> On the self-referentiality of this chorus, see Wilson and Taplin (1994) 174. See Parry (1992) 64-65 on binding in magic.

In what follows, I read through the trilogy, focusing on a cluster of sounds. I begin by considering the unexpected and foreboding song that haunts the Chorus of Elders in *Agamemnon*, followed by the scream that issues from Clytemnestra's dream in the *Choephoroi*. Finally, I treat the snores, pants, and moans that the Erinyes emit in the *Eumenides*, along with their binding song. I argue that it is possible to chart the escalating threat represented by the Erinyes across these crucial sonic moments, where sound comes ominously and without clear sense.<sup>478</sup> The eventual integration of the Furies into the *polis* resonates vocally as a transformation in their voices: the Erinyes' foul breathing, snoring and whimpering cease as these beings transform into a more civilised chorus.<sup>479</sup>

Throughout the *Oresteia*, the three respective Choruses demonstrate a high level of sensitivity toward sounds which emerge from nonhuman objects or otherwise uncertain sources. Thus the Choruses generate a haunted soundscape that is fully realised with the onstage emergence of the Erinyes.<sup>480</sup> The Choruses of the *Agamemnon* and the *Choephoroi* each comment extensively on the nonsense, inanimate voices, which lack obvious sources, and produce anxiety within the drama. In so doing, these Choruses frequently link the interpretation of dreams and the interpretation of sounds, especially as regards the fortunes or misfortunes to come for the characters in the drama. Like dreams, sounds become portents that both elude and demand interpretation. They are thus represented in the *Oresteia* as bearing agential force and driving significance in the plot.

The trilogy's first direct linkage between sound and dream emerges from *Agamemnon*'s Chorus of Elders. Upon Agamemnon's return, as Clytemnestra persuades the king to trample upon

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<sup>478</sup> On Aeschylus' negative exaggeration of the Erinyes' religious characteristics, see Johnston (1999) 257.

<sup>479</sup> See Ewans (1995) 200 for the view that the Erinyes do not metamorphose in any substantial or essential way, but rather that they renegotiate the direction of their divine agency. See also Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 158-159.

<sup>480</sup> On the intimate connection between musical registers and sociality, see Wilson and Taplin (1994).

the finery she has spread for him, the Chorus expresses the emotional ambiguity they experience in the metaphor of a ghostly, intrusive song:

τίπτε μοι τόδ' ἐμπέδως  
δειῖμα προστατήριον  
καρδίας τερασκόπου ποτᾶται;  
μαντιπολεῖ δ' ἀκέλευστος ἄμισθος ἀοιδά,  
οὐδ' ἀποπτύσαι δίκαν  
δυσκρίτων ὄνειράτων  
θάρσος εὐπειθὲς ἴ-  
ζει φρενὸς φίλον θρόνον. (Ag. 975-983)

Here the Chorus itself makes the connection between dreams and sound, indicating that both have an eerie sense of otherworldly intervention and significance.<sup>481</sup> Both creep into the play, communicating extralinguistically and offering a kind of unclear 'sense.'<sup>482</sup>

After the Chorus describes this sonic intervention, they compare their own voices and song to the voices of the Erinyes – thus sonically anticipating the Chorus of the Eumenides. While the Chorus' visual experience (the return of the Argives) may offer a cause for celebration, the metaphorical sonic realm that they imagine conveys the darker tone of what is to come:

πεύθομαι δ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων  
νόστον, αὐτόμαρτυς ὦν·  
τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὕμνωιδεῖ  
θρηῖνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν  
θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων  
ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος.  
σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτοι ματάι-  
ζει, πρὸς ἐνδίκους φρεσίν,  
τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκλούμενον κέαρ.  
εὐχομαι δ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς  
ἐλπίδος ψύθη πεσεῖν  
ἐς τὸ μὴ τελεσφόρον. (Ag. 987-1000)

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<sup>481</sup> See Scott (1984) 10.

<sup>482</sup> See Holmes (2008) 242, on the embodiment of fear. See also Bowman (1997) on the treatment of a dream as a *teras* in Sophocles' *Electra*.

This Chorus of Elders maintains a self-conscious and fraught relationship with its own vocality. They express a sense of foreboding that conjures, and is even almost conjured by, the coming events of the entire *Oresteia*.<sup>483</sup> The lyreless (ἄνευ λύρας, Ag. 989) sounds of the Erinyes seep into the psychic and sonic imagination of the Chorus. The Chorus' furious premonition announces the Erinyes' inevitable role within the trilogy's plot, and, at the same time, sonically forecasts the metamorphosis of the Chorus of Elders into an eventual Chorus of Furies. The monstrous song is coming: but at this stage, the song which the Chorus of Elders describes lacks any transcribed lyrics or linguistic meaning within the play. It is instead purely prefigured sound that generates meaning here – and an imaginary sound at that, depending on the staging of the play.<sup>484</sup>

This vocal likeness between the Chorus of Elders and the Chorus of Furies is intensified at the end of the *Agamemnon*, when Aegisthus – in a gesture of polemical insult – describes their voices as opposite in quality and effect to that of Orpheus.<sup>485</sup> He describes them as barking, thus implicating this choral voice in the canine affect that the Furies maintain throughout the trilogy.<sup>486</sup> Furthermore, just as the Furies are described in the *Eumenides* as creatures whom no one would draw near,<sup>487</sup> Aegisthus describes the Chorus of Elders as issuing a repellent voice. He claims that their voices (both in sound and in sense) are the cause of their alleged isolation and social abandonment:

καὶ ταῦτα τᾶπη κλαυμάτων ἀρχηγενῆ·  
 Ὀρφεῖ δὲ γλῶσσαν τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔχεις·  
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἦγε πάντ' ἀπὸ φθογγῆς χαρᾶι,  
 σὺ δ' ἐξορίνας νηπίοις ὑλάγμασιν  
 ἄξιη· κρατηθεῖς δ' ἡμερώτερος φανῆι. (Ag. 1628-1632)

<sup>483</sup> See Haldane (1965) for the *Oresteia*'s musical symbolism that reflects the plot of the play.

<sup>484</sup> See Wilson and Taplin (1994) 171-172 on Cassandra.

<sup>485</sup> Haldane (1965) 39.

<sup>486</sup> On their canine associations and the symbolic force of canines generally, see Padel (1992) 124-125 and Franco (2014). On the many animal qualities attributed to a range of characters in the *Oresteia*, see Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 150-151.

<sup>487</sup> *Eum.* 53, 69f., 179f.

Thus the trilogy implies profound affinity at moments of crisis between the voices of the Chorus of Elders of the *Agamemnon* with the voices of the Erinyes in the *Eumenides*. Aegisthus here suggests that the Elders are (as the Erinyes will be deemed) a source of social stasis. The Argive Elders here generate an uncanny voice – both disembodied and overly embodied – that will resound through the next two plays of the trilogy, through the sounds of the Furies.

In the *Choephoroi* resounds one of the most mysterious sounds in the Greek tragic corpus: that is, the scream that ambiguously issues from Clytemnestra’s dream wherein she nurses a serpent at her breast.<sup>488</sup> There are vivid overlaps between this scream and the Chorus of Elders’ adumbratory intoning of the Furies’ song. Where the *Agamemnon* presents a waking invasion of serpents, a furious sound entering the ears and hearts of the Chorus, the scream scene of the *Choephoroi* portrays an ominous sound aggressively pushing itself out, *ex*-pressing itself, from a dream about serpentine monstrosity.<sup>489</sup> And as I will discuss later, the *Eumenides* begins with the same nexus of sonic imagery: the monstrous Furies (with snakes in their hair) asleep onstage, making strange noises, whilst the Ghost of Clytemnestra enters their dream. The initial account of Clytemnestra’s dream-scream in the *Choephoroi* emphasises the sonic impact on the bodies of those who hear it:

τορὸς γὰρ ὀρθόθριξ δόμων  
ὄνειρόμαντις, ἐξ ὕπνου κότον πνέων,  
ἄωρόνυκτον ἀμβόα-  
    μα μυχόθεν ἔλακε περὶ φόβωι,  
γυναικείοισιν ἐν  
    δώμασιν βαρὺς πίτνων·  
κριταί <τε> τῶνδ’ ὄνειράτων  
θεόθεν ἔλακον ὑπέγγυοι  
μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γᾶς νέρθεν περιθύμως  
τοῖς κτανουῶσι τ’ ἐγκοτεῖν. (*Cho.* 32-41)

<sup>488</sup> For comparison with Stesichorus’ *Oresteia*, see Whallon (1964) 318-319.

<sup>489</sup> See Padel (1992) 124 on the deep connections between serpents and the Erinyes. See also Easterling (2008) 227 on the link between Erinyes and snakes, predicated on the capacity to poison. See also Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 156 on the various serpentine affiliations of characters in the trilogy.

Then, nearly five hundred lines after the sound effect is described, the audience learns the actual imagery of the dream, along with Orestes. The audience is suspended between the fear generated by the dream sound and the actual revelation of its content, just as would have been the case for the Chorus who experienced Clytemnestra's scream. The sound effect for the characters within the drama is thereby simulated in the narrative structure for the external witnesses to the drama.

The Chorus' description of the sound at *Cho.* 34-41 generates an ambiguous account of the sound's source. Does the sound emerge literally from the mouth of a dream interpreter, as the nominative *ὄνειρόμαντις* might suggest? From the dream itself, which might be indicated by *ἐξ ὕπνου κότον πνέων*, as the nominative switches from the subject of the dream interpreter to the unnamed thing which is breathing wrath from sleep? On some level, does the sound emerge from the dreamed persona of Clytemnestra? From Clytemnestra in the state of waking? Or something else more abstract and perhaps numinous?

Readers of the text or members of the audience can only imagine the scream, because its delivery occurs through choral description rather than live articulation; but the text offers clues about the dream-scream's sonic unfolding and dramatic agency. The sound makes the metaphorical hairs of the house stand up (*ὀρθόθριξ*) with horror, and it breathes wrath (*κότον πνέων*, *Cho.* 34). Thus the vision of Clytemnestra and the meaning of the dream are themselves metaphorically aligned with a voice both through the word *τορός*, piercing, and the expression of *κότον*, wrath, through the breath. Is it the dream that is having this embodied effect of terror on the house, or the scream belonging to a dream interpreter or Clytemnestra herself, or the larger

crisis that is manifesting itself through dream and sound? Where does the force of one end and the other begin?<sup>490</sup>

This seems to be a hybrid sound, unspecified – or paradoxically overspecified – with regard to its originating source as well as its temporal location. If this were a scream that issues from the mouth of someone interpreting the dream, it would come significantly after the dream has ended. Yet the present participle of πνέων, which must refer to the agency of the dream itself, suggests a logistically impossible, but symbolically conceivable, simultaneity of the dream’s own sonic self-expression with whatever shrieks a dream interpreter might release. Other temporal tensions exist that enhance the strangeness of this dream sound, for in the moment of hearing the scream, the Chorus cannot know the content of the dream: the scream is, of course, a non-semiotic, extralinguistic expression.<sup>491</sup> But the effect of hearing the sound is hair-raising nonetheless, and it communicates sense on an immediate yet extralinguistic level. This sound is a sign, a portent, of something incomprehensible and unarticulated to the characters, yet something whose danger and crisis is instantly certain.

The repetition of the verb λάσκω in this passage indicates the movement of the sound. The verb’s initial subject is the scream issuing through Clytemnestra in lines 33-34, but then its appearance in line 39 is controlled by κριταί, moving its sense from aurally-focused shouting to the deliverance of message. Furthermore, the verb λάσκω has a variety of particular meanings based on the agent of the sound or voice. Inanimate objects attached to this verb make ringing or crashing noises, as in the *Iliad*; animals in Homer’s epics and in Hesiod’s *Theogony* can shriek, scream, and howl when attached to this verb; men in Greek tragedy attached to this verb can shout,

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<sup>490</sup> See Devereux (1976) 184-188 on these and other ambiguities of the scream’s source, as well as some psychological attempts at resolution.

<sup>491</sup> On the prophetic aspect of the dream, see Devereux (1976) 184. See Macintosh (1994) 93 for Clytemnestra’s understanding of the dream on the cusp of death.

scream, shriek or cry out, and sometimes sing.<sup>492</sup> All of these various senses participate within the soundscape of the repeated forms of *λάσκω* in this scene. The verb's various attributions to inanimate, animal, and human forces converge in the shifting subject attribution in a dreamlike and disorienting manner, making the sound seem even more monstrous, a composite force that itself embodies the terror and crisis that troubles the house of Agamemnon.

The *Choephoroi* thus presents a dream-scream that in a metaphorical sense behaves like a monster, in its violent and terrifying portentous quality that surges through the house. The *Eumenides* begins with a literalisation of that metaphor: monsters that dream and make strange noises in their sleep. The play begins with the Pythia's distraught wonder at their presence.<sup>493</sup> She struggles to identify them, admitting that her monstrous comparisons to Gorgons and Harpies fail in representing the horror of the Erinyes:

πρόσθεν δὲ τάνδρὸς τοῦδε θαυμαστὸς λόχος  
 εὔδει γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἥμενος.  
 οὔτοι γυναῖκας ἀλλὰ Γοργόνας λέγω·  
 οὐδ' αὖτε Γοργείοισιν εἰκάσω τύποις  
 < >  
 εἶδόν ποτ' ἤδη Φινέως γεγραμμένας  
 δεῖπνον φερούσας· ἄπτεροί γε μὴν ἰδεῖν  
 αὐταί, μέλαιναί τ', ἐς τὸ πᾶν βδελύκτροποι·  
 ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν,  
 ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῆ λίβα·  
 καὶ κόσμος οὔτε πρὸς θεῶν ἀγάλματα  
 φέρειν δίκαιος οὔτ' ἐς ἀνθρώπων στέγας. (*Eum.* 46-56)

The Erinyes regularly present a problem of ontological identification throughout the *Oresteia*: even the act of naming, and thus classifying them, proves a fraught venture for the characters in

<sup>492</sup> LSJ s.v. *λάσκω*. See also West (1992) 46 for the sonic implications of this word to describe the prophetic voice.

<sup>493</sup> On the possibility of Gorgon costuming and the appearance of the Erinyes, see Sider (1978) 23-24. On the Pythia's embodied response (stumbling) as a point of contrast with the Erinyes' strength (marked by their dancing feet), see Levine (2015) 271. On this moment as the break between the Erinyes' invisibility in the first two plays of the trilogy and their visibility now, see Easterling (2008) 224. See also Bacon (2001) 53-54 on the Erinyes' portrayal as strangers. On the staging of this scene, see Brown (1983) 22-24.

the trilogy.<sup>494</sup> They seem to belong to the realm of imagination and fantasy, even for the Pythia, whose attempt to make sense of the Erinyes occurs through artificial referents (γεγραμμένας) and comparisons to other mythical creatures.<sup>495</sup>

While still asleep, and indeed in another realm, the Erinyes emit a monstrous and grotesque sound, unheard elsewhere in Greek tragedy: they snore. This sound isolates them from consensual contact with civilisation, according to the Pythia: ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν (*Eum.* 53).<sup>496</sup> This snoring is accompanied by another viscous and foul emission (bloody<sup>497</sup> eye drippage), and also induces the Pythia to use socially degrading language herself:<sup>498</sup> Sommerstein remarks in his commentary on the *Eumenides* that ῥέγκω is a verb 'normally considered below the dignity of tragedy (it is found only at [Eur.] *Rh.* 785, with reference to horses).'<sup>499</sup> Thus their sound itself pollutes the Pythia's own expression, spreading like disease through her voice and through the narrative vocabulary of the play, before the Erinyes even make themselves visible.<sup>500</sup>

Shortly thereafter, the Ghost of Clytemnestra speaks to the Erinyes in a dream. In response, they whimper and groan, as indicated by the sonic stage direction of μυγμός at line 117.<sup>501</sup> The Erinyes' first vocalisations within the tragedy are non-verbal sounds, and thus in the chronological auditory experience of the audience, their voices are primarily sonic and only secondarily semiotic and linguistic. In this vocal exchange between a ghost and a chorus of monsters, there emerges a particularly haunted aural experience for the audience, all of which occurs in the eerie landscape

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<sup>494</sup> Cf. *Eum.* 405-414, for Athena's immediate wonderment at their uniqueness. Even the goddess does not know what to make of the Erinyes. See Finkelstein (2010).

<sup>495</sup> See Whallon (1964) 320.

<sup>496</sup> Sommerstein (1989) 91. Distancing from society is also enforced by βδελύκτροποι (*Eum.* 52).

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> See Taplin (1977b) 371-374 and Whallon (1995) on the appearance of the Furies. See also Padel (1992) 123 on the Erinyes' emissions.

<sup>499</sup> Cf. 264ff. for the Erinyes' desire to slurp Orestes' blood, in exchange for the maternal bloodshed. Sommerstein (1989) 128. On tragic register, see Goldhill (1997) 127.

<sup>500</sup> See Goff (2004) 279-282 on the forces at work in the voice of the Pythia.

<sup>501</sup> For the authenticity of this stage direction, see Taplin (1977a) and (1977b) 15.

of a dream. Clytemnestra's vocality is already problematic in *Agamemnon* for its blending of typically masculine rhetoric with her dangerous matriarchal politics; now that she appears as a speaking ghost in *Eumenides*, that monstrosity within her voice is amplified by her spectral quality.<sup>502</sup>

Clytemnestra furnishes the scene with the voice of the dead in dialogue with the Erinyes' bestial, grotesque whimpers and snores. The Erinyes emit the sounds suggested by *μυγμός* and *ὠγμός* in a sort of nonverbal discourse with Clytemnestra. They punctuate her speech with these sleeping moans, whines, and cries, which elevate into a shrill, doubled shrieking: *μυγμός διπλοῦς ὀξύς* (*Eum.* 129). In this moment, they vocalise like dogs dreaming of the hunt.<sup>503</sup> It is while they are still sleeping that they utter their first *words* transcribed in the script, *λαβέ, λαβέ, λαβέ, λαβέ: φράζου* (*Eum.* 130), which convey the verbal sense of 'catch, catch, catch, catch; see!' but also the repetitive sonic effect of barking and panting, amplifying their canine and predatory associations.<sup>504</sup> The Furies transition from voicing nonsense sounds into semiotic speech, and thus they express verbal sense and sonic sense combined. It is unclear whether Clytemnestra's ghost would have originally been staged as embodied or instead as a disembodied voice during this scene;<sup>505</sup> yet whether or not Clytemnestra is physically present onstage, the soundscape here remains frightening through the exchange of Clytemnestra's ghostly exhortations and the Erinyes' bestial, grotesque whimpers and snores.

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<sup>502</sup> On the voice of Clytemnestra, see Earp (1950) 54-57, Kuhns (1962) 33-36, McClure (1997) in particular, Stanford (1942) 117-119, Winnington-Ingram (1948) 132. On Clytemnestra's monstrous associations, see Lebeck (1967) 183.

<sup>503</sup> Lebeck (1971) 132.

<sup>504</sup> See Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 141-160.

<sup>505</sup> Taplin (1977b) 367 notes that despite the uncertainty regarding the staging, 'the empty scene and eerie noises might be rather effective, and could lead on through a growing sense of horror and strangeness to the climax of the entry of the Erinyes.'

The sense of atrocity which accompanies Clytemnestra's ghost is magnified by her spatial orientation as well as the soundscape, since her shade is alienated from the social sphere in which she belongs – the underworld. Clytemnestra's body thus is a monstrous site and sight, whether or not it is visible to the audience, since it still reveals the wounds of her murder to the Erinyes in their sleep: ὄρα δὲ πληγὰς τάσδε καρδίαι σέθεν (*Eum.* 103), she commands.<sup>506</sup> Clytemnestra's is a porous and ghostly body whose physical boundaries are insecure. The entire vocal exchange in this scene occurs between a spectral murderer and a snoring and shrieking chorus of primeval and violent monsters. The audience finds itself entrenched in a soundscape that is generated by creatures frightening, dangerous, and abject.

Clytemnestra urges the Erinyes to put to use their monstrous exhalations, σὺ δ' αἵματηρὸν πνεῦμ' ἐπουρίσασα τῶι, | ἀτμῶι κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρί (*Eum.* 137-138). The Erinyes, it appears from the discourse surrounding them, can enact physical violence with their exhalations: antiquity's greatest example of halitosis, perhaps, and also an indication of what noise can *do* within the drama of the *Oresteia*.<sup>507</sup> According to the Erinyes themselves, noise and sound can enact a range of violent effects upon the mortal body:

ἐπὶ δὲ τῶι τεθυμένῳ  
 τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,  
 παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς  
 ὕμνος ἐξ Ἐρινύων,  
 δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρ-  
 μιγκτος, αὐτὸνὰ βροτοῖς. (*Eum.* 328-33)

This binding song gives us monstrous voice in its most explicit incarnation in the Greek tragic corpus, as the Erinyes give precise detail of the embodied consequences that are enacted upon the listener by the sounds that they make. Their binding song is usually thought to be accompanied by

<sup>506</sup> For the authenticity of these lines, see Podlecki (1986) 35-42 and (1989) 137.

<sup>507</sup> See Henrichs (1994) 61 on the binding song as a verbal 'attack' on Orestes.

a circular dance around Orestes<sup>508</sup> and is, according to the Chorus, unaccompanied by a lyre (ἀφόρμιγκτος).<sup>509</sup> The song promises to enact madness (παρακοπά), disorientation (παραφορά), destruction and binding of the mind (φρενοδαλής... δέσμιος φρενῶν), and desiccation (αὐονὰ βροτοῖς). Playing upon the link between the spell-binding power of their song and the physical binding which they promise, this Chorus conceptualises their own vocal performance as dangerous and powerful enough to engender madness and physical dissolution.<sup>510</sup>

Despite these explicit and menacing claims, the physical consequences of hearing which the Erinyes allege in their binding song do not seem to occur – or at least the text gives no such indication of such effects upon Orestes in this moment. And as is often the case, the sounds that are most monstrous – or which claim the most rupture, dissolution, and disorder – are the ones which are heavily and metrically stylised. This same tension is borne out by the Erinyes as a result of the contrast between their abject, miasmatic appearances and their anxiety about purification and pollution resulting from the sanctuary for Orestes.<sup>511</sup> After the binding song, Athena appears, summoned by the sound and by Orestes' prayers; and when Orestes speaks again, he does so with a collected mind, thus exhibiting none of the violent symptoms of madness or withering which their song describes. There is no implication, furthermore, that the binding song was incomplete and thereby ineffectual.

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<sup>508</sup> Henrichs (1994) 60-65; Sommerstein (1989) ad 299-396; Taplin (1977b) 386 n. 1.

<sup>509</sup> See Wilson and Taplin (1994) 174 on how this term implies not only that no lyre is present, but also that their song is somehow antithetical to the sounds of the lyre. Cf. the Chorus at Ag. 989-991, τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὁμως ὕμνωιδεῖ | θρήνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν | θυμός.

<sup>510</sup> See Lloyd-Jones (1970) ad loc. 306 on the language of binding spells. See also Rutherford (2012) 46 and Faraone (1985) on the association between this song and curses of the period. See Henrichs (1994) 61-65 on the role of dance and choral self-referentiality in the magic of the Erinyes' binding song.

<sup>511</sup> See Easterling (2008) 221 on the ineffectuality of the binding song on Orestes, but on the fulfillment of the Erinyes' words later in the play; *ibid.*, 230 also accounts for the ineffectuality not through futility of the Erinyes' power but through Athena's protection of Orestes. See also Brown (1983) 26-27 on the Erinyes' attempts to madden Orestes.

The *Eumenides*, a play which is deeply occupied with exploring the contemporary political climate of Athens, thus presents monstrous voice in a way that flirts with ambiguity and transgression only to, in the end, accommodate its integration. Indeed, this voice signifies the ways in which primitive forms of justice, with all of their power, can be seen as monstrous unless they become integrated into the *polis*.<sup>512</sup> Only the divine protection of Apollo and the intervention of Athena can stand in the way between the monstrous voice and the mortal body (in the case of Orestes). The end of the play brings the harmonious reconciliation of the Erinyes and the primal justice they represent into the *polis*, as their mode of justice is seen to be potentially threatening to, but ultimately an important part of, the establishment and history of Athenian *dikē*.<sup>513</sup>

This is why, until the final play's resolution, the Erinyes appear more monstrous than divine.<sup>514</sup> Their monstrous features are numerous: first of all, they come from an earlier time and belong to an ancient cosmogonic order – a fact which they themselves proclaim, as they emphasise their lineage from Nyx (without mention of a male parent).<sup>515</sup> Secondly, they are depicted as terrifying in several aesthetic categories, due to their hybrid, fierce, and animalistic appearances and behaviours,<sup>516</sup> which the Pythia struggles to comprehend and verbalise. Third, they are underworld goddesses, and as such their appearance is out of place in Argos. According to Apollo, they ought to occupy traditional monstrous infernal, or barbarian, geography:

οὔτοι δόμοισι τοῖσδε χρίμπεσθαι πρέπει,  
 ἀλλ' οὗ καραμιστῆρες ὀφθαλμωρύχοι  
 δίκαι σφαγαί τε, σπέρματός τ' ἀποφορᾷ

<sup>512</sup> See Winnington-Ingram (1933) on the notion that that the Delphic mode of justice represented by Apollo is also superseded. See also Rutherford (2012) 1-2 on the ways in which Orestes shares in Clytemnestra's 'monstrous character.'

<sup>513</sup> Seaford (1994) 365. Cf. Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 72-75.

<sup>514</sup> Cf. Bacon (2001) 50-51, who reads Aeschylus' portrayal of the Erinyes as less monstrous and more a representation of 'a universal psychological reality.'

<sup>515</sup> *Eum.* 393-396. On the relationship between old and new gods in *Eum.*, see Solmsen (1949) 178-181.

<sup>516</sup> Clytemnestra chastises the Erinyes while they are asleep (*Eum.* 127-128), saying they have been drained of the serpent's power. This suggests not only that the Erinyes typically behave like snakes but also that they are animated by an ambiguous daimonic serpentine force.

παίδων κακοῦται γλοῦνις, ἦδ' ἀκρωνιὰ  
λευσμοί τε, καὶ μύζουσιν οἰκτισμὸν πολλὸν  
ὑπὸ ῥάχιν παγέντες. (*Eum.* 185-190)

From the descriptions of the Pythia earlier and that of Apollo here, the Aeschylean Erinyes are clearly inconsistent with and antagonistic to the temporal and geographical world of the play: they threaten to infect people and places with their breath, voices, and abject bodily drippage.<sup>517</sup> Even the Erinyes themselves profess the imperative of separation between themselves and Olympian gods:

γιγνομέναισι λάχη τάδ' ἐφ' ἀμὶν ἐκράνθη·  
ἀθανάτων δ' ἀπέχειν χέρας, οὐδέ τις ἐστὶ  
συνδαίτωρ μετὰκοινός.  
παλλεύκων δὲ πέπλων ἀπόμοιρος ἄκληρος ἐτύχθην (*Eum.* 349-352)

The Erinyes are held at such a remove from the Olympian gods that no agent can pass between them.<sup>518</sup> They consistently threaten the new societal order that Athena represents and that Aeschylus strives to establish throughout the *Oresteia*.

The *Eumenides* and its ultimate conclusion demonstrate the necessary integration of the monster into the polis. The successful resolution and establishment of Athenian justice can only occur when these monstrous divinities are granted a civil role within the drama and the larger cosmology that informs it. The creatures that Apollo once identified as belonging with lions must in fact become interwoven with men, into social and political life. In the *Oresteia*, the monster can be domesticated, but not ignored. In reading together these three instances of furious and dream-like sound, it becomes clear that where *logos* drives toward resolution and logic, sound breaks through and cracks open the wordscape of the trilogy, impressing a foreboding sense of crisis.

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<sup>517</sup> See Easterling (2008) 229 on how the Erinyes' being out-of-place participates in the fear they generate.

<sup>518</sup> On the relationship between Zeus and the Erinyes, see Bacon (2001), Brown (1983) 27-28, and Solmsen (1937) 189.

Furthermore, the frequent juxtaposition of dreaming and extralinguistic sound-making invites us to consider these sounds as objects of interpretation.

These sonic moments – the invasive song that enters the mind of the Chorus in *Agamemnon*, the dream-scream from Clytemnestra in the *Choephoroi*, and the Erinyes' dreaming noise-making – all demonstrate that sound participates in the tragic plot. Sound saturates the entire *Oresteia* with dread, inscribing a pervasive Furious presence and enabling the Erinyes to consistently occupy the stage. They compose a soundtrack that courses through the drama and its characters for the entire trilogy.<sup>519</sup>

### Conclusion

In listening to the Aeschylean monsters that vocalise on the tragic stage, we may begin to see the ways in which the monstrous and the human are forced to mingle in Greek tragedy. The voice of Io demonstrates that the monstrous can physically invade the human body. However, the drama of Io and the drama of the Erinyes occur in different spatio-temporal realms altogether, and these two sets of voices seem to represent the two very distinct ways in which tragedy negotiates the integration of monster and human. The voice of Io represents the metaphorical monstrosity of the human condition when distended through divine will. The Erinyes on the other hand undergo a more positive divine intervention that transforms them into a strange but crucial aspect of civilisation. Where Zeus makes the mortal Io monstrous through his power,<sup>520</sup> Athena and Apollo reduce the Erinyes' monstrosity, as they become an integral facet of political justice. It is therefore

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<sup>519</sup> See Brown (1983) for an overview of the scholarly debate as to whether the Erinyes visibly appear onstage at the end of the *Choephoroi*.

<sup>520</sup> See Solmsen (1949) 124-177.

evident that these plays offer two vivid, albeit wide-ranging, examples of the drama of monstrosity itself – the move toward it, in the case of Io, and away from it, in the case of the Erinyes.

Helen Bacon argues that the central transformation that is staged in the *Eumenides* is not Orestes' homecoming, but rather the change in the Erinyes' relationship to both divine and civic order:

The Furies, whose presence is normally a sign of pollution, take up permanent residence in Athens without pollution, acquiring a new status as honored guests instead of outsiders to be driven off. In this final scene, the emphasis shifts (it has indeed been gradually shifting throughout this last play) from the problems of Argos and the house of Atreus to the Furies' role in the cosmos and Athens' role in clarifying it.<sup>521</sup>

The Erinyes' shifting vocalisations are a central component of their development: the metamorphosis away from monstrosity is itself staged vocally as well as on the level of plot.<sup>522</sup>

When the Erinyes express anger and humiliation at the outcome of Athena's trial, she tells them first of all to change their voices and shift their soundscape away from that of grief: ἐμοὶ πίθεσθε μὴ βαρυστόνωος φέρειν (*Eum.* 794). Not yet persuaded out of their grief, they moan and shout vigorously (*Eum.* 808-823, 837-846, 869-880) and aggress with their voices: πνέω τοι μένος <θ'> ἅπαντά τε κότον (*Eum.* 840). When the Erinyes do begin to release some of their rage, they phrase their own change of perspective in language that shifts the incantatory power from themselves (as in the binding song) to Athena, when they reply, θέλξειν μ' ἔοικας, καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότου (*Eum.* 900). No longer exhaling wrath, the Eumenides begin to speak in a rhetoric of protection rather than violence, and they say that no destructive blasts of wind should do harm to the city (*Eum.* 938-941).<sup>523</sup> This directly contrasts with the destructive breaths that Clytemnestra urged that they direct

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<sup>521</sup> Bacon (2001) 52.

<sup>522</sup> See Brown (1983) 29-31 on the transformation in other figures in the trilogy, particularly Apollo.

<sup>523</sup> On this 'change of position' and 'reordering of song', see Wilson and Taplin (1994) 174-175.

at Orestes (*Eum.* 137-138). Athena emphasises the beneficence of their changed voices when she asks,

ἦ τάδ' ἀκούετε, πόλεως φρούριον,  
οἷ' ἐπικραίνει; (*Eum.* 949-950)

The goddess continues to comment on their voices as sources of goodness for the city, in her rhetorical question,

ἄρα φρονοῦσιν γλώσσης ἀγαθῆς  
ὁδὸν εὐρίσκειν;  
ἐκ τῶν φοβερῶν τῶνδε προσώπων  
μέγα κέρδος ὄρῳ τοῖσδε πολίταις·  
τάσδε γὰρ εὐφρονας εὐφρονες ἀεὶ  
μέγα τιμῶντες καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλιν  
ὀρθοδίκαιον  
πρέψετε πάντως διάγοντες. (*Eum.* 988-95)

The voices of the Erinyes move from canine whimpering in the play's opening, to violent incantation in the binding song, to groaning (στενάζω, *Eum.* 818), and finally, to exultation: the play closes with a collective feminine cry of triumph, ὀλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς (*Eum.* 1043, 1047). The voice of the Erinyes is then mingled with the voice of the rest of the procession in these exultations, thus offering aural fulfilment of the broader incorporation of the Erinyes.<sup>524</sup>

The Erinyes, and the gradual incorporation of their choral voice into the tragic soundscape, above all show that, within these plays, the monster enters and inhabits the civic world.<sup>525</sup> This process is one mediated by Athena herself. As Anne Lebeck indicates, there is a sense in which Athena uses her divine voice to incorporate and therefore change the disposition as well as the voices of the Erinyes:

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<sup>524</sup> On cults to Eumenides, see Brown (1984) 260-265. On the significance of this vocal transformation, see Haldane (1965) 39-40.

<sup>525</sup> See Bacon (2001) on the visual dimension as well. She argues that the transformation in the Erinyes' visibility (rather than sonority) into light and out of darkness, into clarity and out of specificity, marks their transition into Olympic cooperative order. See also Segal (1998) on Athena's civilisation of the Erinyes as compared with her translation of the Gorgons' lamenting voices into the *aulos* in Pindar's *Pyth.* 9.

All of [Athena's] speeches request that the Furies refrain from carrying out their threats. And this request both repeats words which they themselves have used and introduces new metaphors to express the same ideas.<sup>526</sup>

This integration of the Erinyes into Athens reveals the ways in which the monster enters the human realm in tragedy. In Chapter 5, it will become clear that the monster continues to resonate in human voices in the genre, even when no monsters or hybrids occupy the stage. The Erinyes vividly exemplify a particular component of Greek monstrosity, which is that the monster's status is often characterised by its cooperation with, or antagonism to, Olympian order. In other words, the Erinyes demonstrate the fluidity of the categories of monster and deity by initially acting as autonomous agents outside of Olympian order; and as such, they look and sound especially monstrous at the beginning of the *Eumenides*.<sup>527</sup> Their violent propagation of a revenge-based justice can only be conceived of as monstrous, *until* such propagation is modified and sanctioned by Athena, and can therefore be seen as commensurate with Olympian order. As the play progresses, and as the Erinyes become cooperative within the order of Zeus – due to the mediation enacted by Athena – they slide away from their monstrous identity and into a more divine identity: still terrifying, still great, but newly recast within Olympian order.<sup>528</sup>

Thus far I have charted the inward trajectory of the monster dramatised in Greek tragedy, and I have shown how the monsters without become monsters within. But there is a further level, treated in Chapter 5, at which monstrosity begins to appear not as an invasion into the human, but an eruption out of the human. The second-hand soundscapes of Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Heracles*, which include the crashing surges of the monstrous sea-bull and the imagined voices of

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<sup>526</sup> Lebeck (1971) 89.

<sup>527</sup> The Erinyes themselves describe the structural division and antagonism between old gods and new gods at *Eum.* 788f.

<sup>528</sup> See Easterling (2008) 225 on how the staging of the Erinyes contributes to their simultaneous bestiality and divinity.

Heracles' weapons, both instigate crises within the plays. The sea-bull's roars, mixed with the sounds of waves, take on agential force within the drama and participate in the death of Hippolytus. The voices Heracles imagines, after his madness has subsided, reiterate the hero's existential otherness.

Traces of the monster's semantic strangeness and sensory threat also emerge in the oppressive cries of pain that fill the soundscape of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. Philoctetes' cries are so subhuman, so unbearable to hear, that they participate in Philoctetes' abandonment on the isle of Lemnos. The monstrous also courses through the horribly hybrid, disfigured voices of other fallen hyper-masculine Sophoclean heroes like Ajax and Heracles. Their lamenting songs reveal an identity-troubling vocal androgyny and rupture from selfhood. These heroes devastate themselves as well as the other characters who hear their voices. The human personality becomes fragmented, hybridised, and socially dangerous – and this process is often explored through the medium of voice.

So, indeed, Greek tragedy is a tricky genre in which to go monster-hunting: but not because the monsters are nowhere to be found. On the contrary, tragedy and its soundscapes tell us that the monster is lurking everywhere. We can hear it in the words of the messenger, in the imagined soundscapes of heroes, even in the heroic voice itself.

## CHAPTER 5

### CENTRIFUGAL MONSTERS IN GREEK TRAGEDY: EURIPIDES AND SOPHOCLES

‘Is it not first through the voice that one becomes animal?’ –Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*<sup>529</sup>

#### Introduction

In Chapter 4, monstrous beings were seen to invade both the human body and the polis and to situate themselves within the human realm. This inward trajectory found in *Prometheus Bound* and the *Oresteia* is complemented in Euripides and Sophocles by an *outward* (and predominantly vocal) movement of monstrosity, which emanates from deep within the tragic hero through the medium of voice itself.

Other Greek literary genres portray monsters whose bodies cut across categories and threaten the human realm with violence, but whose identities remain consistently monstrous. Even when these monsters take on heroic or human qualities, and even when they trouble the divide between monster and human, their monstrous identity is not in itself undergoing a *process* of metamorphosis, flux, or becoming. In Greek tragedy, by contrast, the notion of ‘trajectory’ is essential for an understanding of the rendering of the monster: here, monstrosity is largely explored abstractly as a *process* rather than as a fixed ontological category.

Greek tragedy explores the concept of monstrosity through processes of ‘becoming other’: instead of depicting monsters that are part-human, part-animal, tragedy stages the process of the

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<sup>529</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1987) 4.

human, in extraordinary circumstances, becoming animal.<sup>530</sup> I do not wish to argue that tragedy self-consciously, as a genre, asks, *What to do with the monster?* Nor do I wish to suggest that Greek tragedy offers an answer in the form of metaphorical monsters. Instead I argue that tragedy, although it stages relatively few mythological monsters, is no less interested than other genres in the ontological, religious, and cosmic questions posed by monsters. Tragedy, however, explores these questions differently: not through the staging of literal monsters, but by scrutinising the monstrous and its presence within human beings.<sup>531</sup> Tragedy stages processes of becoming other: man becoming woman, man becoming animal, man becoming monster.

Tragedy uses voice as a central node for these processes of becoming. This is evident in the cases of Io and the Erinyes, for whom voice articulates their transformations: from human to monster (Io) and monster to divinity (Erinyes). This chapter now emphasises an alternative process of becoming, a process that can be dubbed as a ‘monstrous emergence’, which is articulated most vividly in the Euripidean Heracles, as well as the Sophoclean Ajax, Philoctetes, and Heracles. The process of hero becoming monstrous typically begins with an act of violence suffered by the hero, whether in the form of madness (Ajax, Euripides’ Heracles<sup>532</sup>), poison (Sophocles’ Heracles), or snakebite (Philoctetes).<sup>533</sup> Through this physical attack upon the heroic figure, the human hero appears to destroy himself in a variety of ways, becoming a fragmented, hybridised version of himself.<sup>534</sup> Ruth Padel notes that tragedy ‘stages humanity’s need to defend itself against the

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<sup>530</sup> This concept of ‘becoming other’ is modeled on that postulated in Wohl (2005)’s reading of Euripides’ *Bacchae* and Deleuze and Guattari (1987). On monsters and metamorphosis, see Warner (2002) 75-78. Seaford (1994) 363 argues that tragedy as a genre centres around the concept of confusing difference and muddling oppositions.

<sup>531</sup> For brief discussion of the relationship between the terms ‘monster’ and ‘monstrous’ as used in this thesis, see pages 9-11.

<sup>532</sup> See Michelini (1987) 235 for the comparison of Ajax’s and Heracles’ madness.

<sup>533</sup> See Biggs (1966) 233 for the argument that disease in Sophocles’ *Ajax*, *Trachiniae*, and *Philoctetes* functions as a metaphorical ‘outgrowth of the hero’s character in his circumstances.’

<sup>534</sup> Riley (2008) 14-50.

nonhuman... The core hope is that something will survive nonhuman attacks.’<sup>535</sup> The plays examined in this chapter articulate the crises that occur when these ‘nonhuman attacks’ pose a threat to the hero’s own identity. Indeed, these assaults from the nonhuman realm often reveal or enforce an aspect of nonhumanity in the human hero himself.

This metaphorical monstrosity in the human heroes is made manifest through horrible and troubling vocalisations – hybrid, excessive, violent, and ontologically confused. My readings begin with the real monsters that emerge in Greek tragedy and gradually move toward the increasingly abstract renderings of the monstrous. I begin by considering the sounds of the sea-bull in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*. I argue that the sounds generated by this monster reflect one of the play’s central questions, which is the problematic overdetermination of agency and causality in the death of Hippolytus. This is a sound that destabilises categories, drawing all those who hear it into a state of confusion. In this sense, sound wields agential force in *Hippolytus* – though it reaches the audience second-hand, relayed in a Messenger speech. In Euripides’ *Heracles*, the monstrous soundscape also reaches the audience second-hand, because it exists in the mind of Heracles after he awakens from his maddened state. Heracles imagines nonhuman entities, including his weapons and the earth below his feet, speaking to him and reiterating his existential otherness. These imagined voices therefore articulate, to and within the mind of Heracles, the categorical otherness (and the monstrosity) that courses through the hero after his maddened attack on his family.

The monstrous soundscapes in Euripides’ *Hippolytus* and *Heracles* both reflect and instigate categorical crises for those who hear them. This is also the case for the Sophoclean heroes Heracles, Ajax, and Philoctetes. Each of these heroes suffers a major vocal transformation that directly amplifies their respective falls, and calls into question their identities as heroic men. In

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<sup>535</sup> Padel (1992) 5.

Sophocles, both Heracles' and Ajax's voices change from bullish martial exclamation into femininised weeping; Philoctetes' voice changes from socially acceptable *logos* into uncontrollable and extralinguistic cries of agony. In each of these plays, the voices of the heroes cause pain to themselves and to those who encounter them. Their voices place them outside of social propriety. Becoming other happens through the voice, and this process is characterised as transgressive and socially problematic. The same heroic body accommodates figures who were once masculine heroes and who are now feminine (Heracles, Ajax) or animalistic vocalisers (Philoctetes),<sup>536</sup> and so the same body is occupied by radically opposing versions of these characters; the voices and their metamorphoses encapsulate the otherness within the self. It is in this sense that tragedy explores the monstrous through processes of becoming other.

These case studies, although they reveal patterns in the works of the tragedians, should not be taken as programmatic for the entire tragic corpus. There are observable differences in the ways in which each tragedian grapples with the figure of the monster and the concept of monstrosity. The Euripidean tragedies under examination here explore the multiple sources of monstrous soundscapes, which serve to amplify and reflect upon the Euripidean interest in the problem of agency and causality within tragedy. The Sophoclean tragedies examined here all locate monstrosity within the figure of the fallen masculine hero and focus on the crisis that occurs when this monstrosity surges out of the individual hero through the voice. My readings in this chapter move from the more concrete monster sounds into the more abstract monstrous sounds, both of which constitute tragedy's unique exploration of monstrosity.

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<sup>536</sup> On gender and disease in *Philoctetes*, see Kosak (2006).

## Euripides' *Hippolytus*

There are two primary Euripidean figures who project and invoke monstrous soundscapes: the sea-bull in Euripides' *Hippolytus* and Heracles in his eponymous Euripidean tragedy. Readings of tragic voice and sound must consider the nonhuman soundscapes along with the human – particularly because the nonhumanity that resounds in the voices of human heroes often emblematises the nature of the crises.

One of the central soundscapes in Euripides' *Hippolytus* is generated by nonhuman figures, but it is narrated and brought into the play through human language. In lines 1198-1254, the Messenger reports to Theseus that a gigantic bull, sent by Poseidon, rushed out of the ocean. This bull, according to the Messenger, ushers in a clamorous scene of horror and frenzy that affects the humans as well as nonhumans who witness the bull's emergence.<sup>537</sup> The sound that it makes is not performed onstage, but instead is mediated through report and described with vivid phenomenological detail in the Messenger's speech:

ἔνθεν τις ἠχῶ χθόνιος, ὡς βροντῆ Διός,  
βαρὺν βρόμον μεθῆκε, φρικώδη κλυεῖν·  
ὀρθὸν δὲ κρᾶτ' ἔστησαν οὓς τ' ἐς οὐρανὸν  
ἵπποι, παρ' ἡμῖν δ' ἦν φόβος νεανικὸς  
πόθεν ποτ' εἶη φθόγγος. 1205

...  
αὐτῷ δὲ σὺν κλύδωνι καὶ τρικυμίαι  
κῦμ' ἐξέθηκε ταῦρον, ἄγριον τέρας· 1214  
οὐ πᾶσα μὲν χθὼν φθέγγματος πληρουμένη  
φρικῶδες ἀντεφθέγγετ', εἰσορῶσι δὲ  
κρεῖσσον θέαμα δεργμάτων ἐφαίνετο.  
εὐθύς δὲ πάλοις δεινὸς ἐμπίπτει φόβος.  
καὶ δεσπότης μὲν ἵππικοῖσιν ἦθεσιν  
πολὺς ξυνοικῶν ἦρπασ' ἠνίας χεροῖν, 1220  
ἔλκει δὲ κώπην ὥστε ναυβάτης ἀνήρ,  
ἱμάσιν ἐς τοῦπισθεν ἀρτήσας δέμας·  
αἱ δ' ἐνδακοῦσαι στόμια πυριγενῆ γνάθοις

<sup>537</sup> See Barlow (1971) 61-78 and De Jong (1991) on messengers in Euripides. See Conacher (1967) 43 on the transition from the human to the supernatural level in *Hippolytus* and Euripides generally.

βίαι φέρουσιν, οὔτε ναυκλήρου χερὸς  
 οὔθ' ἵπποδέσμων οὔτε κολλητῶν ὄχων 1225  
 μεταστρέφουσαι. κεί μὲν ἐς τὰ μαλθακὰ  
 γαίας ἔχων οἴακας εὐθύνοι δρόμον,  
 προφαίνεται' ἐς τὸ πρόσθεν, ὥστ' ἀναστρέφειν,  
 ταῦρος, φόβωι τέτρωρον ἐκμαίνων ὄχον·  
 εἰ δ' ἐς πέτρας φέροντο μαργῶσαι φρένας, 1230  
 σιγῆι πελάζων ἄντυγι ξυνείπετο,  
 ἐς τοῦθ' ἕως ἔσφηλε κἀνεχαίτισεν  
 ἀψίδα πέτρωι προσβαλὼν ὀχήματος.  
 σύμφυρτα δ' ἦν ἅπαντα· σύριγγές τ' ἄνω  
 τροχῶν ἐπήδων ἀξόνων τ' ἐνήλατα, 1235  
 αὐτὸς δ' ὁ τλήμων ἠνίαισιν ἐμπλακείς  
 δεσμὸν δυσεξέλικτον ἔλκεται δεθείς,  
 σποδοῦμενος μὲν πρὸς πέτραις φίλον κἀρα  
 θραύων τε σάρκας, δεινὰ δ' ἐξαυδῶν κλυεῖν·  
 Στῆτ', ὃ φάτναισι ταῖς ἐμαῖς τεθραμμένοι, 1240  
 μή μ' ἐξαλείψητ'· ὃ πατρὸς τάλαιν' ἀρά·  
 τίς ἄνδρ' ἄριστον βούλεται σῶσαι παρῶν;  
 ...  
 ἵπποι δ' ἔκρυφθεν καὶ τὸ δύστηνον τέρας  
 ταύρου λεπαίας οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅποι χθονός. (Eur. *Hipp.* 1201-1248)

Even in its first moments of description, this soundscape is immediately flagged as a hybrid of divine, animal, and oceanic aspects. The soundscape is compared to Zeus' thunder (*Hipp.* ὡς βροντὴ Διός, *Hipp.* 1201), noted for its chthonic force (χθόνιος, *Hipp.* 1201), and is generated by the physical movement and voice of a strange, out-of-place, and gigantic animal. The sounds of the speech itself mimic the insurgence of the bull's sound. As Halleran notes, 'The miraculous begins with a chthonic rumbling, highlighted by the alliteration of labials and the recurrent r's in βροντὴ Διός, | βαρὺν βρόμον μεθῆκε, φρικώδη.'<sup>538</sup>

Ambiguous sources are a resonant theme in the *Hippolytus*. The Messenger describes the profound uncertainty about the source of the sound itself (*Hipp.* 1204-1205), and it is described in a range of sonic categories, including ἠχώ (*Hipp.* 1202), βαρὺν βρόμον (*Hipp.* 1202), and φθόγγος (*Hipp.* 1205). This plural attribution intensifies the ambiguous sources of the sound. The

<sup>538</sup> Halleran (1995) ad 1201-1202.

soundscape thus contributes to the more general ambiguity about agency and causality found in Euripidean tragedy.<sup>539</sup> Just as we may be prompted to ask who or what is responsible for this moment of violence and bloodshed instigated by the bull's emergence, we may also ask similar questions about the soundscape and its origins.<sup>540</sup> The Messenger's speech continues to emphasise the ways in which this sound has physiological consequences for its listeners: the sound behaves as a shudder-inducing (*Hipp.* 1202), foreboding sonic portent of Hippolytus' fate, but it is also in itself the startling event which triggers the violence of Hippolytus' death.

The sea-bull's soundscape, in addition to combining the divine, oceanic, animal, and human sonic categories, also engenders a 'destruction of communication'<sup>541</sup> and a categorical levelling for those who hear it. Both animals and humans are equally struck by it (*Hipp.* 1203-1205). The division of beast and man dissolves in the face of this monstrous sound, as its audience is reduced to fear and wonderment in its presence. The sound cuts across categorical difference. The Messenger's speech makes clear the sheer force of monstrous sound: it is a sonic experience that causes civilisation and its structures to crumble. The messenger tells of the horses' flawless training, which seems to disappear when they are faced with the onslaught of this monstrous, chthonic, and bestial sound. Their accumulated 'civilising' instantly vanishes. The horses, forgetting their training, are reduced to panic and frenzy. They flee the bull, crash into rocks, and mangle the body of Hippolytus. As the Messenger remarks, σὺμφύρτα δ' ἦν ἅπαντα (*Hipp.* 1234): 'Everything was confusion.'

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<sup>539</sup> Holmes (2010) 253 discusses the ambiguity in the play's attribution of agency and violence, and she focuses her discourse on the body as a figure that offers a further ambiguation of this problem.

<sup>540</sup> These questions are reminiscent of those explored in our reading of the scream from Clytemnestra's dream in the *Choephoroi*, Chapter 4, 179-182.

<sup>541</sup> Segal (1993) 92.

The sound that the messenger describes is therefore hybrid, portentous, and carries a category-destabilising effect. The emergence of the sea-bull ruptures the civilised world of the play, as John Gould writes:

The language and the imagery of this passage powerfully create an awareness that what is happening here is the wreck and destruction of human skills, of a lifetime of effort spent in trying to create a common world of man and animal; it is the untaming of the wild, the utter and instantaneous annihilation of human technology, of culture itself. Seamanship, metallurgy, horse-breaking, wagon-building are all associated in our perception of what is here swept away.<sup>542</sup>

This ‘annihilation... of culture itself’ is emblematised in the image of the animals (the horses), the man (Hippolytus), and the technology (the carriage) all tangled up in a grisly and chaotic scene of violence, prompted by the emergence of the bull. The sound described by the Messenger instead induces sheer terror, and its sources are ambiguous and hybrid. The sea-bull thus enacts two components of monstrosity, since it behaves both as a real-life monster and a portent from a god.<sup>543</sup> Hippolytus adds his own voice to this soundscape that includes the roaring of the earth, the bellowing of the bull, its echoes, the crashing of waves, the clamour of the horses. He speaks through the violence (*Hipp.* 1234-1239): his voice cries out in anguish and futility to the horses, begging them not to obliterate him, precisely while his body is being mangled and battered. Hippolytus’ voice in turn is characterised as horrible to hear (δεινὰ δ’ ἐξαυδῶν κλυεῖν, *Hipp.* 1239). His screams of pain resound with those of the bull, the earth, and the sea, as he wishes for death and laments his fate.

Just as the sounds described by the messenger are emitted by a range of sources, it is equally impossible to identify a single agent of the violence inflicted upon the body of Hippolytus.<sup>544</sup> Is it

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<sup>542</sup> Gould (1985) 29.

<sup>543</sup> See Introduction, 23-31. See Segal (1993) 99.

<sup>544</sup> See Gould (1985) 28-29 on how ‘Aphrodite’s revenge works through human motivations.’ See also Michelini (1987) on the even balance of error across the play’s three major characters. At *Hipp.* 1403, Hippolytus himself casts all the blame on Aphrodite.

the horses, whose reactions to the sea-bull inadvertently result in the flaying of Hippolytus? Or is the bull the agent, since its emergence is what triggers the horses to smart and trample the youth, even though the bull itself does nothing but emerge and disappear? Perhaps Poseidon, who sends the bull as an answer to Theseus' request? Perhaps Theseus who made the request? Perhaps Phaedra who lied to Theseus, prompting the wish to Poseidon? Perhaps Aphrodite, who orchestrates the unfolding of the plot in response to Hippolytus' ἀσέβεια? Perhaps also Hippolytus, for maintaining his ἀσέβεια against Aphrodite in the first place?

My aim is not to articulate a singular agent of this violence, but rather to demonstrate that it percolates through a huge range of divine, monstrous, animal, and human hosts. The violence and its overdetermination resonate in the soundscape of the Messenger's speech, where the violence of the plot and the sound accompanying the monster mutually permeate the human and nonhuman characters in the play. Listening to the mediated soundscape surrounding the sea-bull indicates that the mode of forceful violence that unfolds in the plot of *Hippolytus* operates in a number of registers, through a range of agents, in multiple modes.

It is fairly easy and altogether unsurprising to call the crises and violence of tragic plots 'monstrous' in a loose metaphorical use of the word, but here I am attempting to show that even the offstage soundscape can be productively discussed as a sonic manifestation of some of the larger questions of the tragedy. The real, rather than metaphorical monster, comes out of the sea and lends its qualities and characteristics both to the soundscape and to the tragic plot itself. My reading of *Hippolytus* attempts to show the ways in which soundscape can become agential. The soundscape itself is generated by means of a monstrous hybridity and multiplicity of agencies, both human and nonhuman, which are at the heart of the questions posed by the play. The nonhuman vocality seen in tragedy – through the bull, the ocean, the horses, the winds in

*Hippolytus* – is intimately linked with that centrally tragic, and particularly Euripidean, question of agency and causality in tragedy.

### **Euripides' *Heracles***

The sea-bull in *Hippolytus* and Heracles in his Euripidean name-play enact two complementary aspects of the 'processes' emblematic of Greek tragedy's exploration of monstrosity. The sea-bull represents the kinetic encroachment of the monster into the human realm. It comes out of the sea, bringing terror, disruption, and violence from the monstrous and divine realms onto the human body of Hippolytus. Euripides' *Heracles* translates into abstraction this supervention of the monstrous within the human, through the figure of Heracles himself. In his maddened state, Heracles is transformed into a conduit for the divine wrath of Hera as enacted through Lyssa.<sup>545</sup> Heracles himself enacts monstrous violence upon his children and his wife, and in this moment, the archetypal monster-slayer becomes both the monster and the slayer, both the agent and the patient of a maddened violence.

This violence becomes monstrous not only in its sheer excess and horror, but also in the fact that the persona of Heracles becomes fragmented, doubled, hybridised; the mad Heracles and the sane Heracles' are accommodated in the same acting body.<sup>546</sup> Indeed, in this instance as elsewhere in Sophocles' *Ajax*, *Philoctetes* and *Trachiniae*, madness in tragedy takes on a monstrous aspect because it simultaneously doubles and fragments the self into something that is both one's 'own' and 'other'.<sup>547</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> See Provenza (2013) 68-69 on the monstrosity in the depiction of Lyssa. See also Holmes (2008).

<sup>546</sup> On Heracles' madness and its connection to shamanistic duties, see Burkert (1979) 93-96.

<sup>547</sup> Riley (2008) 14-50.

But unlike the sounds of the Sophoclean Ajax, Philoctetes, and Heracles, this Euripidean Heracles conjures an imagined monstrous soundscape – he imagines the earth opening up and speaking, telling him not to tread upon it, and that the rivers will also acquire a voice, telling him he may not cross:

ἐς τοῦτο δ' ἤξειν συμφορᾶς οἴμαι ποτε·  
φωνὴν γὰρ ἤσει χθῶν ἀπεννέπουσά με  
μὴ θιγγάνειν γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν  
πηγαί τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἀρματήλατον  
Ἴξιον· ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἐκμμήσομαι.  
[καὶ ταῦτ' ἄριστα, μηδέν' Ἑλλήνων μ' ὀρᾶν,  
ἐν οἷσιν εὐτυχοῦντες ἤμεν ὄλβιοι.]  
τί δῆτά με ζῆν δεῖ; (*HF* 1294-1301)

In addition to the earth and the rivers, Heracles also imagines the weapons with which he slew his family, singing and speaking to him at his side:

ὦ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων  
τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὄπλων κοινωνία.  
ἀμηχανῶ γὰρ πότερ' ἔχω τάδ' ἢ μεθῶ,  
ἂ πλευρὰ τὰμὰ προσπίτνοντ' ἐρεῖ τάδε·  
Ἥμῖν τέκν' εἶλες καὶ δάμαρθ'· ἡμᾶς ἔχεις  
παιδοκτόνους σοῦς. εἴτ' ἐγὼ τάδ' ὠλέναις  
οἴσω; τί φάσκων; (*HF* 1376-1382)

Whereas the Sophoclean heroes' voices (as we will see) peel out of their distressed crises, the monstrous voice within the *Heracles* instead takes the form of the imagined, metaphorical voice of the cosmos itself.<sup>548</sup> This imagined voice reminds the hero that his only true possessions are instruments of violence (*HF* ἡμᾶς ἔχεις παιδοκτόνους σοῦς), and it also denies Heracles a place in the universe.<sup>549</sup> Helene Foley articulates the ways in which the social structures of Thebes cannot accommodate Heracles and the violence he represents, but Athens (and tragedy itself) offer a solution to the man for whom there seems to be no place in the cosmos:

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<sup>548</sup> Barlow (1996) ad 1295ff. compares this passage to *OT* 1427-1428, but notes that the passage in *Heracles* is unique because the elements themselves are speaking. See also Padilla (1992) 12.

<sup>549</sup> See Foley (1985) 168-175; Bond (1981) ad 158; and Michelini (1987) 242-246 on the weapons.

The *Heracles* also raises with particular directness social and artistic questions central to all Greek tragedy. First, how can the heroic *aretē* of a Heracles be celebrated in an Athenian context? The crazed Heracles of the peripety can be said to represent a whole class of epic heroes whose violent achievement of *kleos* (fame) comes ultimately at the cost of their family's or community's survival... In the *Heracles* Euripides systematically confronts almost the entire earlier tradition on Heracles and the contradictions it poses for a Thebes that finds no place for the hero. Yet finally only Athens and tragedy, with its emphasis on sacrifice, violence, and suffering, can rescue Heracles from the 'death' and anachronism with which is threatened in the earlier scenes and create an untraditional spiritualized hero equal to the mutability of human life and valuable for the Athenian *polis*.<sup>550</sup>

The inanimate world takes on a voice that tells the story of Heracles' state of existential and social crisis.

These voices circulate in Heracles' human imagination, but centre around nonhuman speakers. In this way, they differ greatly from the Sophoclean monstrous voices, which surge out of the human form with traces of otherness and distension ascribed within their sonority. Both the Euripidean and the Sophoclean Heracles come to realise that the return to the domestic space brings consequences more monstrous and more unbearable than the mythical monsters he encountered on his labours. Euripides' Heracles explicitly characterises the return home as the final labour, τὸν λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας πόνον, | παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς (*HF* 1279-1280).<sup>551</sup> In *Trach.* 1058-1063, Heracles says that it was a woman (Deianeira) who proved to be the agent of his destruction after all.

Foley notes that Heracles' maddened slaughter of his children functions as a final disastrous labour as well as a perversion of both traditional sacrifice and song: 'The language of the play represents Heracles' crime not only as a perverted sacrifice but also as a monstrous *agōn* and as a terrifying unmusical song or Dionysiac ritual.'<sup>552</sup> The tragic Heracles therefore serves to exemplify

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<sup>550</sup> Foley (1985) 150.

<sup>551</sup> On the agonistic ironies in the play, see *ibid.*, 154-155. Barlow (1996) ad 922-1015 writes that the madness is particularly convincing because, in it, Heracles performs a level of violence at which he is adept from his previous labours. See also Provenza (2013) 70-71.

<sup>552</sup> Foley (1985) 147.

precisely the ‘monstrous trajectory’ of tragedy I have worked to illustrate in these chapters. Where we saw the voices of literal monsters onstage in the tragedies of Aeschylus, and we will see the monstrous voices emerging out of the mouths of mortal heroes in Sophocles, we find in Euripides something actually quite different. In the *Hippolytus* and the *Heracles*, monstrous sound works as a complex, hybrid, ‘overdetermined’,<sup>553</sup> and nonhuman force that behaves as an agent, both on the level of plot and of emotion.

This monstrous soundscape, which is imaginary rather than auditory, occurs in the mental landscape of the hero, who himself represents the transfiguration of the human.<sup>554</sup> In the Messenger’s speech, which describes the maddened Heracles, he simultaneously compares the hero to a Gorgon and a smith, thus demonstrating the melding of monstrous terror and human trade:

ὁ δ’ ἀγριωπὸν ὄμμα Γοργόνος στρέφων,  
ὡς ἐντὸς ἔστι παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος  
μυδροκτύπον μίμημ’ ὑπὲρ κάρα βαλῶν  
ξύλον καθῆκε παιδὸς ἐς ξανθὸν κάρα,  
ἔρρηξε δ’ ὄστᾱ. (*HF* 990-994)

Heracles does not so much reside *between* states of monster and human, but rather occupies too many, becoming in some ways like a monster himself.<sup>555</sup> This description functions as the ‘culmination of the Gorgon references in the play’, according to Bond.<sup>556</sup> Indeed, comparisons to the Gorgon have punctuated the play: Heracles (*HF* 868 and 990), his children (*HF* 130), and Lyssa (*HF* 883) have all been likened to this figure. The Gorgon’s frequency and range of attributions emphasises the monstrosity that courses through Heracles’ return to the *oikos*. Where

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<sup>553</sup> Holmes (2008) 233.

<sup>554</sup> On the contradictions embodied by the tragic Heracles, see Papadimitropoulos (2008) 131.

<sup>555</sup> The specialness of Heracles is strengthened by the fact that the gods Iris and Lyssa directly interact with Heracles, making an otherwise unprecedented ‘joint entrance’ of divine characters, and breaking the custom whereby gods in Euripides appear only in prologues and at the ends of the plays. See Halleran (1985) 88, who describes the difference between Iris and Lyssa and the ‘mortal’ Dionysus of *Bacchae* as well as the Dioskouroi of *Electra*. See also Chapter 4, 203-213 on the monstrosity of Heracles.

<sup>556</sup> Bond (1981) ad 990; Provenza (2013) 81-82.

Heracles' children showed promise through their own Gorgon-like gaze when practicing archery (*HF* 130-133), this comparison becomes a source of pathetic irony when Heracles' own Gorgonic archery skills preclude the possibility of their maturation.<sup>557</sup>

Heracles therefore embodies the trajectory that functions as the main presence of the monster in Greek tragedy – moving from faraway places into the *oikos*, from the strange to the domestic.<sup>558</sup> Just as the Erinyes become integrated into the *polis* in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Euripides' Heracles manifests his maddened monstrosity in the domestic realm, and is ultimately accommodated by Athens, where he receives both land (*HF* 1329) and cult (*HF* 1331-1333).<sup>559</sup> Heracles slays numerous monsters in faraway lands, but the obstacle by which he is ultimately tainted, is the one that imbues him with his own monstrosity in the domestic sphere.<sup>560</sup> In an indirect and belated sense, Heracles is also slain by a monster (Nessus) in the *Trachiniae*, albeit after a considerable lapse of time. The involvement of the domestic space within the play's violence marks tragedy's unique take on the monstrous. The monster no longer emerges straightforwardly as an opponent to the human. Instead, tragedy presents plots wherein the human is made to internalise the monster, in different ways according to different circumstances.

Euripides' Heracles unknowingly becomes the ultimate threat to his own family when he transforms, through madness, into the monstrous fighter whose violent powers are unleashed in the wrong setting.<sup>561</sup> When Heracles puts himself inside the skin of the slain Nemean lion (*HF* 359-

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<sup>557</sup> Padilla (1992). On the play's depiction of the children, see Griffiths (2002).

<sup>558</sup> On the theme of domesticity in the Heracles myth, see Michelini (1987) 250-254.

<sup>559</sup> Foley (1985) 165; Tarkow (1977). On the connection between the Erinyes and Lyssa, see Provenza (2013) 82-83.

<sup>560</sup> On Heracles' divine aspect, and his consequent 'unintentional threat to divine power', see Foley (1985) 157-58; see also Michelini (1987) 254-58.

<sup>561</sup> On the belief that the madness was latent in Heracles all along, see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1895), Kamerbeek (1966), Verrall (1895), and Murray (1913). Papadimitropoulos (2008) 135 suggests that Heracles' bullish vocalisations indicate that bestiality was present in the hero before the onset of his madness. On the role of the gods, see Michelini (1987) 267-76. On the disparity between the characters' speculations about the gods and the 'actual' nature of the gods in *Heracles*, see Conacher (1955). On the significance of Cerberus in Heracles' fate, see Griffiths (2002).

363), he immerses himself in a monstrous body from which he cannot fully escape. His defeat of the monster, as well as its power, becomes a part of his physical self. As we will see, there are numerous parallels with Sophocles' Heracles, who internalises his own violence against monsters: this violence rebounds, through a series of mediations and agents, onto himself. Like the lion skin in Euripides' *Heracles*, the poisoned cloak of the *Trachiniaiæ* appears to infuse the hero with an irreversible dose of monstrosity that exercises itself in the domestic realm.<sup>562</sup>

The soundscape of Heracles' madness in Euripides' tragedy takes on agential force within the process of Heracles' maddening and monsterization. The *aulos* is repeatedly implicated in Lyssa's attack upon Heracles, in a way that emphasises the instrument's maddening force and also invokes the presence of Dionysus. Although the madness is imposed by Lyssa herself, Dionysus' presence in the unfolding of *mania* is profound. Lyssa makes Heracles dance in a maddened state with the *aulos*, which implies Dionysian ritual and the power of the *aulos* to transform and muddle the mind: *τάχα σ' ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ καταυλήσω φόβωι (HF 871).*<sup>563</sup>

The figures of Dionysus, the *aulos*, Lyssa, and Gorgons all coalesce in the chorus' expressions of woe. The Chorus speaks within the same discourse as Lyssa in order to describe the *aulos*' role in maddening Heracles.

ὄτοτοτοῖ, στέναξον· ἀποκείρεται  
 σὸν ἄνθος πόλεος, ὁ Διὸς ἔκγονος·  
 μέλεος Ἑλλάς, ἃ τὸν εὐεργέταν  
 ἀποβαλεῖς ὀλεῖς μανιάσιν λύσσαις  
 χορευθέντ' ἐναύλοις.

βέβακεν ἐν δίφροισιν ἃ πολύστονος,  
 ἄρμασι δ' ἐνδίδωσι  
 κέντρον ὡς ἐπὶ λώβαι  
 Νυκτὸς Γοργῶν ἑκατογκεφάλους

<sup>562</sup> See Halleran (1985) 83 on the connection between the lion skin of Heracles and the funeral robes worn by his family.

<sup>563</sup> See Gurd (2016) 129-131.

ὄφρων ἰαχήμασι Λύσσα μαρμαρωπός.

ταχὺ τὸν εὐτυχῆ μετέβαλεν δαίμων,  
ταχὺ δὲ πρὸς πατρὸς τέκν' ἐκπνεύσεται. (*HF* 875-885)

The chorus here reiterates the centrality of the *aulos*' agency, and furthermore invokes a number of other figures that implicitly participate in Heracles' maddened violence. The figure of Dionysus assumes a great presence through the maddened, musically-driven dance of the hero, and Lyssa's attack on Heracles is later described by the chorus as a performance of Bacchic frenzy (*HF* 895-898). Heracles is later referred to as a 'bacchant of Hades', and he roars like a bull – one of the avatars of Dionysus himself.<sup>564</sup>

Heracles' body therefore becomes a conduit for the power of Dionysus. Heracles also becomes feminised through the comparison to the bacchantes, and his act of killing his children casts him in similar roles to those of Agave and Medea.<sup>565</sup> During the slaughter, the connection between the *aulos* and the Gorgons is strengthened, as Lyssa herself is characterised as a Gorgon; and, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, Heracles takes on a Gorgonic gaze of his own during his maddened violence (*HF* 990-994). A broadened network between Lyssa, the Gorgons, Heracles, and the Erinyes emerges as well, for the Erinyes are also known in tragedy for their auletic song that induces madness – and they too are daughters of Night. Here the Bacchic revelry functions as a perversion of Dionysian ritual, with a grim rather than a festive outcome:

ΧΟΡΟΣ  
κατάρχεται χορεύματ' ἄτερ τυπάνων  
οὐ Βρομίου κεχαρισμένα θύρσωι . . .

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ  
ἰὼ δόμοι.

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<sup>564</sup> Provenza (2013).

<sup>565</sup> Cf. Loraux (1995) 121 on the feminisation of Sophocles' Heracles in *Trach.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς αἷματ', οὐχὶ τᾶς Διονυσιάδος  
βοτρυῶν ἐπὶ χεύμασι λοιβᾶς. (*HF* 889-894)

The sounds and the movements are wrong: the Dionysian symbols are absent, and one dark liquid, blood, stands in grim replacement of the grape. Lyssa's presence and activity in the *Heracles* therefore participates within a broad network of nonhuman figures that demonstrates the monstrosity that lies at the heart of tragic madness. This interactive cluster of Lyssa, the Gorgons, the Erinyes, and Dionysus that emerges in Heracles' madness reveals the fundamental connection between Dionysus and the tragic Heracles. The Dionysian music, distorted into a different key, functions as the soundtrack to Heracles' unfolding *mania* in the *Heracles*.

### **Euripides' *Bacchae***

A similar Dionysian musical force is also exemplified by the chorus of Maenads in the *Bacchae*, who in many instances evoke the same power of Dionysian sound as is present in the maddening of Euripides' *Heracles*. The *Bacchae* explores the divinity of a new god by staging the declarative and urgent voice of Dionysus that says, both in voice and in action, *I am a god*. This voice also rouses changes in perception of self and surroundings. The play invokes the power of sound in this religious epiphany, as Dionysian music possesses the bodies of the choruses and a range of characters throughout the play; the Bacchae, for example, become as if Gorgons, with snakes twined in their hair (*Bacch.* 102-104). In this sense, the *Bacchae* offers a useful counterpart to the theory of tragic voice posed in Shane Butler's *The Ancient Phonograph*, where Butler emphasises the centrality of the Heracleian voice to the tragic genre. Butler's Heracleian voice finds a

complement in the Dionysian voice as manifest in the *Bacchae* (and even in the *Cyclops*).<sup>566</sup> Indeed, this Dionysian voice is also absolutely present in the depiction of Heracles' madness in Euripides' *Heracles*.

Butler argues that tragedy as a genre is essentially vocal. This vocality is epitomised by the figure of Heracles across Sophoclean, Euripidean, and even Senecan tragedy. Butler therefore posits Heracleian vocality as a theoretical displacement of Dionysian sound at the genre's core.<sup>567</sup> Shifting away from a focus either on the professed Dionysian origins of tragedy or Nietzschean-Dionysian musicality, Butler proffers a different sonic mode as central to the aesthetics of the tragic genre: 'We shall wind up not so much with tragedy's birth as with an enduring aspect of its essence, which we shall locate not in Dionysian music but in the 'Heracleian' voice.'<sup>568</sup> This voice is distinct for the kind of expression it enables:

[The Heracleian voice] offers instead [of meaning] a kind of deferral, exposing without explaining the very flesh (ensouled and envoiced...) in and from which it emerges. The Heracleian is the body under pressure, the body as resistance, the body itself as medium, expressing as it is impressed. The Heracleian, we may even say, *is* the body as it becomes audible in tragic speech and song.<sup>569</sup>

Butler's reorientation of the tragic genre around the Heracleian voice is useful in its revelation of tragedy's use of distended voices to express that which is inexpressible in language. Yet the act of situating the genre's essence as vocal in contradistinction to its Dionysian aspect creates an artificial separation.<sup>570</sup> Indeed, Butler's suggestion that 'we can plausibly contemplate a vocal

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<sup>566</sup> See Coda, pp. 239-242 for discussion of Euripides' *Cyclops*.

<sup>567</sup> In excerpted form, it may be easy to confuse Butler's terms with claims either about tragedy's origins or as engaging in an uncritical Nietzschean adoption. Butler's argument shifts away from originary questions and focuses instead on tragic essence in terms of generic quality. He describes a distilled set of features by using the term 'Dionysian.' Indeed, Butler here attempts to reframe the questions asked about tragedy's 'essence', so his use of the term 'Dionysian' is less in dialogue with history of religion and ritual, and more in dialogue with the history of scholarship on Greek tragedy and its accompanying lexicon.

<sup>568</sup> Butler (2015) 122.

<sup>569</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>570</sup> I am using the word 'Dionysian' in response to Butler's use of the term, which appears to refer to abstracted essence of the divine figure and its mythic associations, rather than to Dionysian rituals. Cf. Wilson (2005) 185.

rather than a Dionysian origin for tragedy'<sup>571</sup> reveals only a partial consideration of the Dionysian as it is manifest in tragedy. The Dionysus of Euripides' *Bacchae* reveals that there is no 'vocal rather than... Dionysian', since the two adjectives, though not synonymous, mutually invoke one another.<sup>572</sup> We need not consider tragedy as either vocal or Dionysian, but instead as simultaneously both. In divorcing the Heraclean voice from Dionysian music, Butler overlooks the fact that this embodied 'Heraclean' sonic revelation resides on a continuum with a 'Dionysian' model of sound.

This 'Heraclean Principle' is predicated on the non- or extra-linguistic expressivity of the body under pressure. But it is additionally essential to consider the impact of sound itself upon the body: the *impressibility* of sound in addition to its *expressibility*. Of course, Butler himself sets up this mutual pairing of impression and expression, but localises these in the figure of the sound-generating body: how the Heraclean body is impressed (by the poison of the philtre in *Trachiniae* or the onset of madness in *Heracles*) and then becomes an expressive interface. Important and suggestive as this reading is, it omits any discussion of how these *expressed* sounds then inevitably go on to make further *impressions* on the hearers and receivers of those sounds – or how the impressions of sound distended the body of Heracles in the first place. In Greek tragedy, sounds make impressions both upon characters onstage as well as upon members of the audience, although these sounds necessarily operate on different planes of semiotic and aesthetic receptivity.

Euripides' *Bacchae* exemplifies the fact that sound is not only expressed by characters onstage, but also takes on an active role within the unfolding of the plot. The play opens with the

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<sup>571</sup> Butler (2015) 147.

<sup>572</sup> As Alexiou (2002) demonstrates in her examination of ritual lament, tragedy in some ways can be seen to stem from the *kommos*, which Alexiou identifies as a particularly feminine and embodied vocal expression. See Taplin (1977b) 474 on *kommos* as lamenting lyric rather than non-mourning lyric dialogue. Cf. Swift (2010) 298-366.

voice of Dionysus, who, after describing his wide travels, tells the Chorus that he has returned to Greece in and for an act of vocal manifestation:

πρώτας δὲ Θήβας τῆσδε γῆς Ἑλληνίδος  
ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ' ἐξάψας χροὸς  
θύρσον τε δοὺς ἐς χεῖρα, κίσσινον βέλος· (*Bacch.* 23-25)

The use of ἀνωλόλυζω aptly characterises the voice as a force and agent: the verb ἀνωλόλυζω means ‘cry aloud, shout aloud’ but also carries a causal sense of ‘to excite by Bacchic cries’ in Euripides.<sup>573</sup> Within this soundscape, cries are not only manifestations of excitement, but also causes of possible violence.<sup>574</sup> Voice both reflects and stimulates the plot, and the Dionysian religiosity and character unfolds through vocal as well as sonic means.

Dionysus, the noisy god, reveals the phenomenological and agential force of sound in *Bacchae*, particularly in the prologue, in which he declares that he has invented certain instruments for the express purpose of making his divinity known (*Bacch.* 58-59). He claims to have created an army of sound when he declares that any resistance from the city of Thebes will be met with his band of maenads (μαϊνάσι στρατηλατῶν, *Bacch.* 52), whom he invokes so that they take up their newly invented instruments and make a din in military gesture to Pentheus.<sup>575</sup>

αἴρεσθε τὰπιχώρι' ἐν Φρυγῶν πόλει  
τύπανα, ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὐρήματα,  
βασίλειά τ' ἀμφὶ δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε  
κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, ὡς ὄρᾳ Κάδμου πόλις. (*Bacch.* 58-61)

Like the verb ἀνωλόλυζω (*Bacch.* 24), the command κτυπεῖτε invokes a causal force attributed to sound itself, suggesting that Dionysus envisions sound not only as an aesthetic experience but also as a nonhuman agent.<sup>576</sup> The kind of sound for which Dionysus has assembled a military band is

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<sup>573</sup> LSJ, s.v. ἀνωλόλυζω. Dodds (1944) ad 24, takes this causal sense of the verb from the causative prefix ἀνα-, glossing ἀνωλόλυξα as ‘I stirred to women’s cries’ and emphasising the femininity associated with the ὀλοολυγή.

<sup>574</sup> On the literal violence of the thyrsus suggested by βέλος, see Dodds (1944) ad 25.

<sup>575</sup> Cf. Dodds (1944) ad 55-61.

<sup>576</sup> LSJ s.v. κτυπέω.

a sound of immense chthonic and percussive force, which causes his divinity to be heard, seen, and known experientially.<sup>577</sup>

In the *parodos*, the Chorus refers to making noise and to singing hymns, thereby including chaotic sound as well as formalised song in their worship. These Bacchae thereby behave as an echo chamber for his divinity: their bodies themselves become instruments,<sup>578</sup> through which Dionysus' power can be played and expressed, as their cries work to usher in Dionysian divinity:

ἴτε βάκχαι, ἴτε βάκχαι,  
Βρόμιον παῖδα θεὸν θεοῦ  
Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι  
Φρυγίων ἐξ ὀρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς εὐ-  
ρυχόρους ἀγυιάς, τὸν Βρόμιον· (*Bacch.* 83-87)

With Βρόμιον as the bookends of the command (*Bacch.* 84, 87), the bacchantes sonically summon a world wherein the god is made present and manifest everywhere through the sounds of their voices, amplified through sound.

The absolute centrality of sound to Dionysus' manifestation in this play is intensified further by the claims made by the god and by the Chorus (*Bacch.* 58-61, 123-129) – that the maenads' instruments were invented specifically for this purpose – and the sound that they create is thus primal. Furthermore, these sounds derive from their connection to geographical place and to a chthonic divinity (*Bacch.* 58-59), flowing from the earth like milk, wine, and honey. The Chorus echoes this instrumental foundation story in lines 123-134:

ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις  
βυρσότονον κύκλωμα τόδε  
μοι Κορύβαντες ἡῦρον·  
βακχίαι δ' ἅμα συντόνωι

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<sup>577</sup> See also Pind. *Dith.* 2.1-30 for another example of Dionysian music figured as affective. For discussion of this poem with reference to New Music and sound effects, see D'Angour (1997), Gurd (2016) 110-112, and Porter (2010) 378-383. See also Csapo (2000) for discussion of the Dionysian properties of New Music.

<sup>578</sup> Cf. Montroso (2014) 47, on the body of the Prioress' boy in Chaucer's *Prioress' Tale* as an instrument played by a roving, parasitic song, 'a host from which the *Alma Redemptoris* continues to replicate. Song must rely on the host/instrument to give shape to its accidental properties, because it is by these properties that the sonic substance is able to parasite relations and continue to spread as an infection.'

κέρασαν ἠδυβόαι Φρυγίων  
αὐλῶν πνεύματι ματρός τε Ῥέας ἐς  
χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι βακχῶν·  
παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι  
ματέρος ἐξάνυσαντο θεᾶς,  
ἐς δὲ χορεύματα  
συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων,  
αἴς χαίρει Διόνυσος. (*Bacch.* 123-134)

Thus the Chorus reminds the audience that the soundscape of this play carries strains of divine, chthonic, and human instrumentation (notably including the *aulos*); they also indicate that this soundscape is unique to Bacchic revelry and novel to its internal audience of bacchantes and satyrs (*Bacch.* 129-130). These are sounds which emerge through a range of nonhuman and human agents,<sup>579</sup> for the very purpose of performing and enacting Dionysus' religious manifestation; these are sounds which rouse action. Indeed, Dionysian music in the *Bacchae* is predicated on the manipulation of the dancing, religious body (*Bacch.* 129), but also on the sounds which are created by that very percussive body.<sup>580</sup>

The essential link between the god and sonic power is regularly reinforced throughout the *Bacchae*, not least in his name Bromios, used five times in the parodos alone (*Bacch.* 66, 84, 87, 115, 141). The name indicates that noisiness itself exists at the core of Dionysus.<sup>581</sup> Where tragedy offers so much for the voice to play with in its metrical and musical wealth,<sup>582</sup> it also offers just as much possibility for that voice to shake and move the individual characters onstage, as well as the audience, in this Dionysian mode made possible by the sonic agent. It is thus mistaken to consider

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<sup>579</sup> On the savagery of maenadism, see Seaford (1994) 259.

<sup>580</sup> The question of the typicality of the *Bacchae* presents itself. My claim is not that this reading of Dionysian music in the *Bacchae* is emblematic of all tragic music, but rather that this representation of the god of tragedy proposes a special relationship between Dionysus and sound that demonstrates a general theory of the way sound operates when associated with Dionysus. See Dodds (1944) xxxix-l on the archaising qualities of *Bacchae* and the play's relationship to Euripides' corpus. See also Seaford (1994) 28 on the *Bacchae* as 'in a sense the closest to the beginnings of the genre', Henrichs (2013) 570-577 on the multiplicity of Dionysus, Segal (1997) 159 on the *Bacchae* as 'a kind of quintessential tragedy.'

<sup>581</sup> See Gurd (2016) 135-139 on Dionysus' ability to raise visions through sound.

<sup>582</sup> Nooter (2012) 12.

tragic sound only within the moment of its expression and only in terms of its production, without attention to its impact and reception. Indeed, it is essential to think more broadly about the phenomenological experience of sonic force as articulated in and through both the monstrous and the normative bodies that vocalise on the tragic stage. The *Bacchae* demonstrates that sound itself can intrude as an actor in the tragic plot and as a potent force through the listening body. In sum, this mode of reified tragic sound must be acknowledged in order to hear more fully the monstrous voices that tragedy stages.

### **Sophocles' *Trachiniae***

Sophocles' *Trachiniae* begins with Deianeira's account of the river Achelous' violent erotic appetite for her, a river who takes on the shape of a bull (11), a serpent (12), and a minotaur (12-13). Achelous is ambiguously slain in battle by Heracles, with no narrative account of how the man defeats the river. This Achelous shapeshifts not only into the forms of animals associated with monstrosity, the snake<sup>583</sup> and the bull, but also into a monstrous hybrid, ἀνδρείω κύτει | βούπρωρος (*Trach.* 12-13). Furthermore, Achelous' slaughter at the hands of Heracles situates him within a cast of monstrous characters.<sup>584</sup> Nonhuman threats from the uncivilised world threaten to encroach upon the body of Deianeira and the domestic space she represents.

In *Trach.* 22-23, Deianeira says that she cannot speak to the nature of the battle between Heracles and Achelous; she adds that if there were any person not terrified by its spectacle, that person would be the one who could tell the story of the battle. The ambiguous unfolding of violence that predates the plot time of the play thus foreshadows the violence which is to come: a monstrous

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<sup>583</sup> Ogden (2013).

<sup>584</sup> See Sorum (1978) 63 and Galinsky (1972) for discussion of the likenesses between Heracles and Achelous.

poison in disguise, transferred from the Hydra to the Centaur to the wife to a garment to a messenger and finally, to the husband.

This is the erotic context which opens the play: one in which nonhuman, violent figures express erotic appetites for the human figure Deianeira, and also one in which we learn that Heracles sacks an entire city to attain possession of the maiden Iole. As Segal notes, this gesture shows Heracles' resemblances to the beasts he has fought: 'A "sacker of cities" (244, 364-365, 750), he becomes an opponent of civilization, like one of those threatening beasts he has subdued.'<sup>585</sup> Shortly thereafter (not in the play itself, but in the chronology of the pre-story), Deianeira is carried across a river by the centaur Nessus, who attempts to rape her midstream. Nessus is stopped and shot by Heracles' Hydra-poisoned arrow. The centaur tells Deianeira to take his blood, in the area where it mingles with the Hydra's blood, and to keep it as a philtre.

Deianeira does not realise that the blood is not actually a love potion but rather a lethal, skin-eating poison. She dyes a cloak with the philtre in hopes of drawing her husband's affection back to herself when he returns from afar, enamoured with Iole. Deianeira, once she realises the unintended consequences of what she has done, commits suicide. When Heracles puts on the garment, he is eaten alive by the poison, and his anguish is protracted and staged in exclamations of pain. The poison of this object transforms Heracles from the hypermasculine, violent hero who sacked a village in pursuit of *eros*, into a feminised, wounded, and weeping body. Heracles unwittingly falls victim to the misguided *eros* of Deianeira and the malevolent *eros* and avenging spirit of the Centaur, localised in the object of the poisoned cloak.<sup>586</sup> The cloak itself becomes an

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<sup>585</sup> Segal (1981) 63. See also Easterling (1982) 5 on the 'beast-like strength and violence of *eros* at work in human beings – in Deianeira as well as in Heracles.' On the presence of the slain monsters in unfolding of Soph. *Trach.*, see Sorum (1978).

<sup>586</sup> On the feminisation of Heracles' death, see Loraux (1995) 121. See Sorum (1978) 59-60, Segal (1977b) 114, and Biggs (1966) 223-235 for discussion of the philtre's beast-like aspect.

inanimate but flesh-eating agent of the dead Centaur. As Heracles bemoans, the cloak is a woven net of the Furies (Ἐρινύων | ὕφαντὸν ἀμφίβληστρον, *Trach.* 1051-1052): its monstrosity is therefore manifold.<sup>587</sup>

The *Trachiniae* is a play that stands apart from the other surviving Sophoclean tragedies for its fantastical themes and for the monsters that occupy the play's immediate background. Indeed, as Charles Segal notes: '[T]he bestial figure of the Centaur Nessus, invisible but ever-present throughout the action, conveys into the human foreground an archaic, phantasmagoric world of monstrous shapes.'<sup>588</sup> These 'monstrous shapes' are matched also by monstrous sounds expressed by the hero Heracles. When Heracles in the *Trachiniae* delivers his explosive and tortured speech at 1046-1110, this Sophoclean hero describes his vocal metamorphosis in terms that resemble Tecmessa's description of Ajax's voice (*Aj.* 317-323).

The 'unstable position between beast and god, order and disorder'<sup>589</sup> that Heracles occupies resounds in his voice. Heracles uses a form the verb βρυχάομαι<sup>590</sup> to refer to his voice, as he roars out in spasms of pain (*Trach.* 805). He thus uses the same verb that Tecmessa uses to describe Ajax's voice after his spell of madness. In the Nurse's description of Deianeira's anguish preceding her death, she tells the Women of Trachis that Deianeira also emits a roar, βρυχᾶτο (*Trach.* 904), at the moment when her domestic possessions trigger memories of a time before her inadvertent poisoning of Heracles.

The fact that Deianeira's bullish outcry is triggered by her contact with inanimate objects underlines *Trachiniae*'s larger engagement with objects and agency. Indeed, objects assume roles

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<sup>587</sup> See Wender (1974) for discussion of the links between *Trachiniae* and Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. See Winnington-Ingram (1980) 205-216 on the presence of Furies in Sophocles.

<sup>588</sup> Segal (1981) 60. See *ibid.*, 62 for the 'wild landscapes' of *Trachiniae*, less typical of tragedy and more typical of monstrous encounters in epic poetry.

<sup>589</sup> Foley (1985) 191. See also Papadimitropoulos (2008) 136.

<sup>590</sup> The second messenger in Soph. *OT* 1265 also uses this verb to describe the sound Oedipus emits when he sees Jocasta hanged.

that are as deadly as the humans who wield them in this tragedy: through Heracles himself, through his monstrous victims (the Centaur, the Hydra), and through Deianeira. This sense of violence is transferred across bodies, and through objects, and is articulated by the soundscape across time, too: Deianeira's roar echoes Heracles' own from one hundred lines previous.<sup>591</sup> The protracted violence seems to distend the voices of both Deianeira and Heracles into animalistic anguish. Her realisation that she has poisoned him makes her vocally bullish and masculine, and his pain and death make him vocally womanish (*Trach.* 1075): the monster has disfigured them both. The force of *eros* in the *Trachiniae* – whether it is the *eros* as experienced by Achelous, Nessus, Heracles, or Deianeira – is dangerous, forceful, and transgressive. As the play develops, it becomes clear that the imperatives of *eros*, with their boundary-crossing nature, infect both the subjects and objects of desire.

For both Heracles and Ajax, the voice becomes the locus of heroic deflation as well as madness. Stanford notes that sudden changes in vocal quality were 'a recognized symptom of mental derangement.'<sup>592</sup> Ajax vocalises like a woman and physically associates himself with animals – murdered, violated beasts, no less – in order to reflect his downfall from his masculine and human greatness. Heracles, meanwhile, roars and weeps simultaneously, ὅστις ὥστε παρθένος | βέβρυχα κλαίων (*Trach.* 1071-1072),<sup>593</sup> demonstrating that his voice too crosses gender

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<sup>591</sup> Easterling (1982) ad 904 comments on the kinetic transference and sonority of the scene, in a way that demonstrates how *Trachiniae* translates the central questions of agency and violence into the soundscape: 'The scene is full of sound and movement: βρυχᾶτο (what Heracles did in his agony, cf. 805n.), προσπίπτουσ' κλαίει, ἄλληι κάλλι στρωφωμένη, ἔκλαιεν, ἀνακαλουμένη. The sound-echoes at the ends of 907, 909, 910, 913 reinforce this effect.' Cf. Rood (2010) for the silence of Aphrodite in *Trach.*

<sup>592</sup> Stanford (1963) ad 321-322.

<sup>593</sup> Swift (2010) 325 argues that these passages from the *Ajax* and *Trachiniae* should not be considered 'simply an issue of gender, for tragic females too are frequently advised to control their grief.' But while excess grief can be dangerous coming from women, it does not alter or problematise their gender identities, and for the sake of demonstrating vocal metamorphosis, the role that gender plays here is essential.

categories. It is from Heracles' vocalisations that he emerges as suffering and feminine: νῶν δ' ἐκ τοιούτου θῆλως ἠΰρημαι τάλας (*Trach.* 1075).<sup>594</sup>

Heracles is a hero who resides in a liminal, interstitial zone between living and dead,<sup>595</sup> and between man and god;<sup>596</sup> and he simultaneously maintains the vocal quality of a bull, βέβρυχα – the favourite Greek word for 'the death cry of wounded men'<sup>597</sup> – whilst also sounding like a girl (*Trach.* 1075). The Sophoclean Heracles therefore remains vocally hyper-masculine as he roars, while also issuing feminine weeping and cries. His hybrid and suffering voice thus troubles social organisation of gender and sound within the ancient Greek imagination. Just as the original erotic aggressor, Achelous, shapeshifts into the forms of a bull, a serpent, and a minotaur, Heracles' suffering refracts him into forms human, bestial, masculine, and feminine. The monsters slain by Heracles manage to intrude upon the human realm through the power and violence encapsulated in the philtre, moving from the remotest geographies into the interior space of the home and the Heracleian body. Heracles' vanquished monsters therefore enact the category-destabilising effect typical of Greek mythological monsters,<sup>598</sup> as they transfigure the hero's identity and his voice.<sup>599</sup> Communication itself is destabilised: as Segal argues, the various objects that attempt to act as communication between Heracles and Deinaeira (the robe, its seal, and the tablet) all result in a disastrous failure of speech.

The creatures that Heracles slew in order to civilise the world in turn find a means to enter the depths of the monster-slayer's home. Heracles' own violence against the centaur Nessus, committed with arrows dipped in the poison of the Hydra, another of Heracles' victims, is

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<sup>594</sup> *Trach.* 1075. Easterling (1982) ad 1070-1072 notes that Heracles' weeping is in the manner of an adult female.

<sup>595</sup> Macintosh (1994) 68-69.

<sup>596</sup> Silk (1985).

<sup>597</sup> LSJ s.v. βρυχάομαι.

<sup>598</sup> See Introduction, 9-11.

<sup>599</sup> See Segal (1981) 93 on the ways in which other characters' voices are 'reduced to inarticulate cries of pain or lamentation' at various points in the play.

translated and redirected onto himself. This chain of violent acts begins with the hero and rebounds against him later on, in a way that resembles the ruin of Ajax. By reading the plot through the lens of voice, both Heracles and Ajax can be seen to exist in what we might imagine as a Möbius strip of maddened violence and suffering that fragments the heroes into a monstrous simultaneity of agent and patient. They both become doubled, as agent and patient of pain; they become hybrid, as both roles are accommodated by one body.

### Sophocles' *Ajax*

In Sophocles' *Ajax*, the hero's monstrosity surfaces during a bout of divinely induced madness. This madness causes Ajax to mistake a flock of animals for the Argives, and instigates Ajax's misdirected slaughter of animals rather than his former comrades who have wronged and dishonoured him. Throughout the play's portrayal of Ajax's ruin, the downfall of the hero is emphasised and mapped through the transformations in his vocal expressions.<sup>600</sup> Ajax emerges from his maddened state, disorientated. Tecmessa gives Ajax an account of his madness, wherein she describes the strange and monstrous novelty of Ajax's voice: ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ἐξώμωξεν οἰμωγὰς λυγράς, | ἄς οὔποτ' αὐτοῦ πρόσθεν εἰσήκουσ' ἐγώ (*Aj.* 317-318). In addition to the jarring newness of this mode of expression, Tecmessa reflects upon the former sounds of Ajax's voice before the onset of his madness – a voice that the audience of the play never actually hears.

The Ajax who speaks on the Sophoclean stage is already fallen: he is fundamentally transformed from the hypermasculine figure of myth.<sup>601</sup> Tecmessa also recalls Ajax's former

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<sup>600</sup> See Nooter (2012) 31-55.

<sup>601</sup> Cf. Ajax's speech in *Iliad* 9.624-642, where Ajax critiques Achilles for having a savage or wild (ἄγριος) heart instead of a gracious (ἴλαος) one. See Zanker (1992) on the *Ajax* and its heroes as a reception of various heroes in Homer's *Iliad*.

opinions regarding suitable modes of expression for masculine heroes, as ἐξηγεῖτ' reveals his prior didactic moralisation of vocal sound and performance:<sup>602</sup>

πρὸς γὰρ κακοῦ τε καὶ βαρυψύχου γόους  
τοιούσδ' ἀεὶ ποτ' ἀνδρὸς ἐξηγεῖτ' ἔχειν·  
ἀλλ' ἀψόφητος ὀξέων κωκυμάτων  
ὑπεστέναζε ταῦρος ὧς βρυχώμενος. (*Aj.* 319-322)

Ajax's voice used to rage and bellow in the manner of a bull, and now, in stark irony, he has destroyed a flock of animals, and with them, his own identity as a noble warrior (*Aj.* 323-328).

Indeed, the metaphorical bestiality in his voice was formerly a source of masculine empowerment, but now serves as stark reminder of Ajax's mistake. This scene emphasises the duality of the hero's bullishness, which makes Ajax more than human in his violent physical prowess, but also less than human in his madness and his rage. His voice has taken to tones of harsh shrieking (ὀξέων κωκυμάτων, *Aj.* 321) and lament (κωδύρεται, *Aj.* 327), no longer the bovine cry that used to sound his hyper-masculine identity. Faced with the unbearable pressure placed upon him through the cognisance of his madness, likeness to bulls is no longer a masculinising force but rather a dehumanising one, which shifts out of vocal metaphor and into embodied literalisation.

Ajax, an example of superlative martial prowess,<sup>603</sup> here reveals that the bestiality that furnishes the hero with martial greatness is double-edged. This bestiality, when stretched to its limits, can transform the agent of socially-sanctioned violence into the patient of socially absurd violence – and can furthermore transform the masculine into the emasculated feminine. The 'monstrosity' here can be located in the performance of gender as well as the other ways in which the bullishness of Ajax surges out – improperly directed and inadequately contained under the

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<sup>602</sup> Jebb (1896) ad 320 notes that ἐξηγεῖτ' 'implies authoritative exposition... and suggests the submissive reverence with which Tecmessa listened to her lord.'

<sup>603</sup> See Winnington-Ingram (1980) 22 n. 35.

influence of madness. And just as the masculinity in Ajax's voice moves into femininity through the process of madness, the bestiality therein seems influenced by a nefarious divinity, as Tecmessa describes his lashing of the animals and the strange sounds of his voice under the influence of mania:

μέγαν ἵπποδέτην ῥυτῆρα λαβῶν  
παίει λιγυρᾶ μάστιγι διπλῆ,  
κακὰ δεινάζων ῥήμαθ', ἃ δαίμων  
κοῦδεις ἀνδρῶν ἐδίδαξεν. (*Aj.* 241-244)

The soundscape of this tragedy thus simultaneously enacts and reflects Ajax's degradation. This is intensified by the fact that his vocalisations are narrated and mediated through the voice of a woman,<sup>604</sup> while the masculine hero lies in lament with the beasts. This demasculination and dehumanisation of the hero is further activated through Ajax's extra-metrical cries at *Aj.* 333, 336, 339. These cries have the startling effect of disrupting the verbal continuity of the drama but also demonstrate that Ajax cannot fit into the social, verbal scheme in which the rest of the characters participate.<sup>605</sup> Loraux describes Ajax's lamenting voice as producing an uncanny effect within the tragedy: 'When he recognizes the shame into which he has fallen, though still reluctant to moan like a women, the virile hero simultaneously discovers the sob *aiai* and his own despair; but it is *aiai* (alas!) that he now hears, over and over again, in the sound of his own name *Aias* (Ajax).'<sup>606</sup>

Sounds depart from and then boomerang back to the hero, in a gesture of tragic irony that occurs on the level of Ajax's own persona. The same signifiers take on wildly different significance: we have seen how Ajax's own bullishness takes on a grimly different aspect before

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<sup>604</sup> This is particularly charged by the hero's remark to Tecmessa that silence brings adornment to women, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἢ σιγὴ φέρει (*Aj.* 293).

<sup>605</sup> Changes in metre and extrametrical utterances are common in Sophoclean heroes. Cf. Nooter (2012) 11 and Hall (2002). For the gendering of voice, see Swift (2010) 305. Garvie (1998) ad 319-320 notes that the hero's femininised expressions complicate his heroic status.

<sup>606</sup> Loraux (2002) 37. The cry *aiai* occurs at line 370; Ajax's realisation of the irony occurs at 430-433. See also Stanford (1963) ad 430-433 and Garvie (1998) ad 430-433.

and after his *mania*. In a similar vein, Ajax's own premature laughter (303) returns to haunt him when transferred to the mouths of others (376).<sup>607</sup> The Chorus proposes that Ajax suffers from the blow of some god (ξύμφομη δὴ σοι καὶ δέδοικα μὴ ἔκ θεοῦ | πληγὴ τις ἦκει, *Aj.* 278-279), but Ajax himself points out that his ruin is both external – ἐκ θεοῦ – and internal, as the sound of his own name takes on a strange, sorrowful quality.<sup>608</sup> Ajax experiences an uncanny hyperconsciousness of self, when he sees that the mourning cry *ai ai* – which he deems so antithetical to his own vocal identity – echoes, latent within his own name, when he cries,

αἰᾶ· τίς ἄν ποτ' ὄρεθ' ὦδ' ἐπώνυμον  
τοῦμὸν ξυνοῖσειν ὄνομα τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς; (*Aj.* 430-431)

Thus in Sophocles' *Ajax*, sound – and in particular, the gendered and categorical inflections of the voice – functions as a medium through which the fall of the hero, and the hero's complicity in that fall, is negotiated and explored. The destruction of Ajax, the voice tells us, was present in Ajax all along.<sup>609</sup>

### Sophocles' *Philoctetes*

Sophocles' *Philoctetes* offers a particularly rich example of metaphorically monstrous sound in its inarticulate and overwhelming cries of pain. *Philoctetes* includes textual inscription both of Philoctetes' voice and of the other characters' response to hearing this voice.<sup>610</sup> The wound that provokes Philoctetes' cries itself takes on monstrous and violent properties,<sup>611</sup> and Philoctetes is treated as a social monster because of the discomfort his wound and his voice arouses in his fellow

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<sup>607</sup> Michelini (1987) 235 and Maddalena (1963) 138.

<sup>608</sup> See Winnington-Ingram (1980) 11-56.

<sup>609</sup> On this vocal irony, see also Nooter (2012) 40, who writes: 'He expresses the poetic irony lodged in his identity, defining his own place in language.'

<sup>610</sup> See Budelmann (2007) on the representation and reception of Philoctetes' pain. See also Scarry (1985) 5-11.

<sup>611</sup> Pucci (2003) ad 7.

soldiers. Bernard Knox writes, '[Philoctetes'] comrades in arms who abandoned him had no excuse but the repugnance they felt for his sickness and their inability to stand his cries of agony.'<sup>612</sup> In addition to the social 'repugnance' that Philoctetes' comrades experience toward him, Odysseus characterises him as not 'truly human' when he tells Neoptolemus that Lemnos is βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη (*Phil.* 2) – implying that Philoctetes' presence there is insubstantial in the context of human habitation.<sup>613</sup> The voice of Philoctetes reveals what happens to the human body when it becomes wounded by this particular serpentine monster: it is unable to heal, it becomes socially disruptive, and it makes the human being a monstrous presence.<sup>614</sup>

In combination with the comrades' repugnance at this voice, the Chorus describes Philoctetes' voice as violent and overwhelming: in their description, the voice itself, the ἐτύμα φθογγά, becomes an agent of violence.<sup>615</sup> Philoctetes' voice, therefore, takes on the violent and agential power characteristic of Greek monsters generally. The voice, which acts as an expression of an unendurable pain, in turn inflicts pain upon those who hear it:

προῦφάνη κτύπος,  
 φωτὸς σύντροφος ὡς τειρομένου <του>,  
 ἢ που τᾶδ' ἢ τᾶδε τόπων.  
 βάλλει βάλλει μ' ἐτύμα  
 φθογγά του στίβον κατ' ἀνάγ-  
 καν ἔρποντος, οὐδέ με λά-  
 θει βαρεῖα τηλόθεν αὐ-  
 δὰ τρυσάνωρ· διάσημα θρηνεῖ. (*Phil.* 202-209).

<sup>612</sup> Knox (1964) 42. On the wound's metaphorical implications for Philoctetes' piety, see Segal (1977a); on Philoctetes and the gods, see Schein (2005) 39-43.

<sup>613</sup> Schein (2003) 110. See also *ibid.*, 93-94 on Lemnos, which audiences would have known was an Athenian ally and a populated place. Schein argues that the description of Lemnos as unpopulated would have therefore amplified Philoctetes' isolation and abandonment. Cf. Pucci (2003) ad 2, who argues that Odysseus' statement implies that the place is frequented by immortals. See also Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1990) 165-66 on Philoctetes' (and Oedipus' in Soph. *OC*) localised isolation in Lemnos. Cf. Inoue (1979) 219-220 on Sophocles' emphasis on environment and objects rather than on Philoctetes himself.

<sup>614</sup> On the threats represented by snakes in Greek tragedy, see Padel (1992) 123-124.

<sup>615</sup> Other examples of violent sounds include Aesch. *Cho.* 380-381 and 451-452.

Here the Chorus describes the aggressive, pain-inducing voice of Philoctetes in a manner that heightens its violent impact.<sup>616</sup> The sound of Philoctetes becomes the subject, and its act of resonance becomes the verb; Philoctetes himself becomes an unnamed afterthought to his sonic impact upon the Chorus. The agency here belongs to, in the first instance, the noise (with κτύπος expressing the notion of noise, crash, or sound rather than voice), his ‘true voice’, the ἐτύμα φθογγά.

The monstrosity of Philoctetes’ voice is felt through its violence, its anti-sociality, and its sublimation of the human personality.<sup>617</sup> Philoctetes’ disease, inflicted by a monstrous serpent, supersedes his identity and asserts the power of the monstrous onto the body of the mortal. Its painful presence, characterised as wild (ἄγριος), forces him to vocalise in a completely nonhuman manner, and it takes control of his speech.<sup>618</sup> Philoctetes’ voice furthermore articulates the horror of his fall from Achaean warrior to social monster, from individual subject-position to the epitome of pain itself. His screams demonstrate the fragility of the boundaries between the human and the animal, since an accidental snakebite has cut down Philoctetes from Greek warrior to societal outcast. Bernard Knox calls it an ‘animal scream of pain’, where the ‘traces of humanity’ dissolve under ‘the pressure of intolerable pain.’<sup>619</sup> Mark Payne describes the anti-sociality of this moment of Philoctetean expression:

[T]hese non-verbal utterances drive other human beings away, cutting Philoctetes off from human society. As H. P. Lovecraft observes in ‘The Call of Cthulhu’, ‘there are vocal qualities peculiar to men, and vocal qualities peculiar to beasts; and it is terrible to hear the one when the source should yield the other.’<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>616</sup> See Pucci (2003) ad 205-209.

<sup>617</sup> Cf. Butler (2015) 145-160 on Heracles; Knox (1964) 52. See Harsh (1960) 410 on the antisociality of Philoctetes and his resulting resemblance to Achilles.

<sup>618</sup> See Segal (1977a) 136 on the similarity in the depiction of Philoctetes’ disease and that of Heracles’ wounding by the philtre in *Trachiniae*. See also Budelmann (2007) 444 for a discussion of how the attribution of ἄγριος to Philoctetes’ and Heracles’ pain raises questions about the heroes’ wildness and loneliness.

<sup>619</sup> Knox (1964) 52.

<sup>620</sup> Payne (2013) 48.

Philoctetes' voice thus enacts what Shane Butler describes as the 'Heracleian principle', the nonsensical, nonverbal, and purely sonic voice that emerges from the 'body under pressure.'<sup>621</sup>

Part of the crisis emerges from the fact that the Philocteteian groan denies the possibility of reply. His vocalisations lack content and prevent engagement. The witness of Philoctetes' forceful pain reduces even Neoptolemus to cries rather than speech (ὰὼ, *Phil.* 759); the sound of Philoctetes' voice brings out more inarticulate distress in Neoptolemus (παπαῖ, *Phil.* 895).<sup>622</sup> In this sense, the voice of Philoctetes calls to mind that of Sophocles' Ajax. The Chorus finds Ajax's words unbearable, because they know neither how to reply nor how to silence him:

οὔτοι σ' ἀπείργειν οὐδ' ὅπως ἐῷ λέγειν  
ἔχω, κακοῖς τοιοῖσδε συμπεπτωκότα. (*Aj.* 428-429)

There is no possible engagement with these cries, nor with the voice of Philoctetes. These cries take on the ἀμήχανος, non-discursive quality that we find in intractable, powerful monsters like Scylla and Typhon. This sense in which Philoctetes' urgent expression of his pain both resists and destroys language contributes to the terror that it manifests for its internal audience. In its sublimation of the human personality, and in its interference with the Argives' pouring of libations (*Phil.* 4-11), Philoctetes' unbearable voice takes on a problematic agential force.<sup>623</sup>

## Conclusion

As we have seen, Aeschylus gives us feminine monsters onstage, and shows the ways in which their voices need to be heard and integrated into the soundscape. Both *Prometheus Bound* and the *Oresteia* furthermore demonstrate the existential proximity between divinity and monstrosity. I classify the monsters in Aeschylus' extant tragedies as 'centripetal' because they begin in a realm

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<sup>621</sup> Butler (2015) 156. For further discussion of Butler's 'Heracleian principle', see Chapter 5, 210-212.

<sup>622</sup> Inoue (1979) 225.

<sup>623</sup> On pain's ability to disrupt action, see Budelmann (2007) 446 and Scarry (1985) 10.

that is ‘outer’ and gradually situate themselves in the centre. Io’s body becomes a human host to a monstrosity, as the god Zeus inflicts a nonhuman transformation upon her. The monster here locates itself within the human body. The Aeschylean Erinyes begin off-stage in the *Oresteia* but gradually creep into the imaginations and soundscape of the play. These monsters take centre stage in the *Eumenides* and hunt the human Orestes until they are recognised by Athena. Their system of justice is modified, and they are given a new home in the Athenian system of justice. In *Prometheus Bound*, the monster moves into the human body. In *Eumenides*, the monsters move into the *polis*.

Both *Hippolytus* and *Heracles* include nonhuman soundscapes that take on agential force and induce terror. The soundscape of the *Hippolytus* demonstrates the ways in which sound can vividly manifest the monster’s threat and generate category crisis. The imagined soundscape of *Heracles* equally belongs to no single or coherent source, but still disorientates the hero and reflects his own existential ambiguity. Monstrosity takes on a ‘centrifugal’ aspect in *Hippolytus* and *Heracles*, as it does in the Sophoclean plays examined in this chapter. In *Hippolytus*, the bull surges out of its monstrous geography and becomes a menace in the human world: its physical movement in this sense is centrifugal. But it also enacts a kind of deferred monstrosity on the body of Hippolytus: although the bull does not directly harm Hippolytus, its insurgence causes the body of Hippolytus to become mangled amidst horses and carriage.<sup>624</sup>

The monster’s emergence into the human realm here instigates an indirect form of violence – enacted through the sheer terror of its appearance – that fuses the human body with nonhuman elements. The monster soars out of the sea, and nonhuman forces soar into Hippolytus’ body, effectively transferring the monstrosity from without to within. The monster is ‘centrifugal’ in the

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<sup>624</sup> Segal (1993) 122 characterises the mangling of Hippolytus’ body as feminising.

ways in which it courses out of the sea, and ‘centripetal’ in the ways in which its impact makes the human body monstrous. We also see ‘centripetal’ monstrosity in the figure of *Heracles*, because Lyssa’s influence unleashes the monstrous potential of Heracles in the domestic sphere: the bull soars out of the hero, as represented in his violence and his voice (*HF* 869-870). Not only a bull, but a Gorgonic monster locates itself within the hero Heracles, and enacts violence against his family.<sup>625</sup> Later, the hero fears that the earth will crack open and a voice will surge out, declaring the message that he belongs nowhere on the earth.<sup>626</sup> The power of voice to incite action and to take power over the mind is exemplified both in Euripides’ *Heracles* and in his *Bacchae*. The *Bacchae* stages the power of sound as generated by human bodies as well as its power upon human bodies: Dionysian music, which is of course central to tragedy’s generic identity, is a driving force within the plots of Euripides’ *Heracles* and *Bacchae*.

Euripides gives an inverse of the Sophoclean pattern, in which the voice of one heroic subject shifts into sounds feminine or animal. Sophocles depicts monstrous sound as bursting out of the human figure. These sounds both reflect and amplify the crises and falls of male heroes. In Sophocles’ *Trachiniae*, *Ajax*, and *Philoctetes*, the heroic voice and its transformations reveal the ways in which the identities of hypermasculine heroes can be distorted into femininity and animality. These transformations furthermore demonstrate the permeability of these identities. It is through the voice that these heroes manifest their otherness, but it is also through the voice that they express their agony at becoming other. Elements of monstrosity can be found in these three Sophoclean tragedies, in the distension of the hero’s identity across categories, and in the voice that sounds that distension, causing distress to the characters who are subject to hearing that voice. Whilst Aeschylus’ tragedies that contain monsters reveal a pattern of monsters moving inward,

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<sup>625</sup> Provenza (2013) 84-87.

<sup>626</sup> See Foley (1985) 158 for Heracles’ as ‘trapped’ between the human and the divine forms of unjust revenge.

these examples from Sophocles' corpus reveal a different pattern, wherein metaphorical monstrosity becomes audible in the human hero and his expressive voice. Instead of moving inward from the outside, monstrosity here is 'centrifugal', insofar as it careens out of the hero's own identity, coming out from within in dangerous and misdirected ways.

The internal bestiality of the hero surfaces as a destructive force whose violence becomes self-directed. As both Knox and Segal have noted in connection with a range of Sophoclean heroes,<sup>627</sup> Aristotle's notion of the *apolis* refers to a man who resides outside of normative humanity.<sup>628</sup> Sophocles' Ajax, Heracles, and Philoctetes exude simultaneous bestiality and superhumanity in ways that situate them outside of political life. This causes crises within their respective tragedies, and also causes their voices to ring out in distended strains that reflect and enact their processes of dehumanisation.

Throughout the Greek tragedies that contain onstage and offstage monsters, there emerges a consistent thematic interest in the monster's relationship with the human: moving toward the city, moving into the human body, surging out from within the human hero. Whether we identify the monster's movement as centrifugal or centripetal, the plays examined in these two chapters on tragedy all include examples of monstrosity that circulate around and course through the human realm in multi-directional ways. As Ruth Padel indicates:

As far as tragedy is concerned, humanity's vision of itself is of something invaded at all points – above, below, outside, inside, by beasts acting for daemons, daemons acting through beasts, beasts that may be *daimōn*, daemons that have beastly attributes, and emotions that may be all at once. Nonhumanity, the surreal or super-real anarchic inseparability of animal and daemonic, besieges the definition of humanity on every side. Animal life, daemonic life, is threatening, negative, upsetting, uncontrollable. Human is its opposite.<sup>629</sup>

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<sup>627</sup> Knox (1964) 42-44; Segal (1981) 60-61.

<sup>628</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1.1253a3ff.

<sup>629</sup> Padel (1992) 150.

We have seen a wide range of processes whereby the monster moves inward and also where monstrous forces disfigure the human personality until it becomes fragmented and monstrous in itself. As we have seen, onstage monsters in Greek tragedy are few; yet monstrosity itself functions as a messy process of human distortion that runs rampant through the heart of Greek tragic drama.

## CODA: MONSTROUS MIMESIS AND THE POWER OF SOUND

The previous chapters have listened to the sounds which monsters make with their mouths and bodies. We have not considered, however, the ways in which instruments participate in monstrous soundscapes. In Chapter 3 of this thesis, I discussed Pindar *Pyth.* 12, where the *aulos* is invented by Athena in imitation of the Gorgons' lament for the slain Medusa.<sup>630</sup> The Gorgons, however, are not the only monsters whose voices are associated with the sounds of the *aulos*. Aeschylus' Erinyes use the *aulos* to accompany their choral binding songs in the *Eumenides*.<sup>631</sup> When the choruses in the *Oresteia* anticipate the arrival of the Furies, they reference the sound of the *aulos* creeping into the soundscape.<sup>632</sup> And when the Messenger describes the violence of the mad Heracles, he invokes the *aulos* as an accompaniment to Heracles' monstrous madness.<sup>633</sup>

In later literary traditions, the Pythian *nomos* is associated with a monstrous myth similar to that of Athena's invention of the *aulos* (Pollux' *Onomastikon* IV.84 and Strabo's *Geography* IX.3.10). Although not contemporary with the poetry considered in the previous chapters, Pollux's and Strabo's accounts of the Pythian *nomos* suggest that monstrous sound sat at the very centre of the performances in auletic and kitharoidic contests.<sup>634</sup> The Pythian *nomos* was played by the musician Sacadas in the late 580s, when he won a musical contest on the *aulos*, and seems to include a similar plot to that of *Hom. Hymn Ap.* 357-361.<sup>635</sup> According to Strabo and Pollux, the Pythian *nomos* (which included the *aulos* as well as other instruments) sonically represents

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<sup>630</sup> Chapter 3, 155-160. See also Pind. *Ol.* 3.3-9 on the sounds of the *aulos* in conjunction with the sounds of the lyre.

<sup>631</sup> Chapter 4, 186. Wilson and Taplin (1994) 174.

<sup>632</sup> For the connection between the Erinyes and the *aulos*, see discussions on p. 179 and 187 of this thesis.

<sup>633</sup> See Gurd (2016) 128 on the Chorus' relationship with music and its meanings in *HF*.

<sup>634</sup> Cf. Pindar's suggestion in *Pyth.* 12.24 that the *aulos* serves a social function as a reminder of contests. See also Power (2010) 134 and 312, and Gostoli (1990) XXIII. On the connection between the Pythian *nomos* and Pindar's *Pythian* 12, see Steiner (2013) and Gurd (2016) 97-131.

<sup>635</sup> See Porter (2010) 383-387. Cf. Gurd (2016) 106.

Apollo's battle against the serpent.<sup>636</sup> The sound of the *nomos* translates this encounter into sound with great imitative detail. In Pollux's account, the *nomos* contains sounds that represent Apollo's 'challenge' to the serpent, the fight between the god and the monster, the gnashing of the serpent's teeth after being struck by arrows, and the victory of the god. Strabo gives a similar account of the *aulos*' mimesis of the fight, and also adds that the final 'whistlings' of the serpent are conjured by the hissing sounds of the *syrix*.<sup>637</sup>

Why do we find, in such wide-ranging literary traditions, a recurring image of the *aulos* conveying the sounds of monsters' defeats? What does a consideration of the *aulos* tell us about monstrous sound and its conceptualisation in Greek musical history? From Pindar to Pollux, we find that powerful and strange mimesis lies at the centre of thought regarding the *aulos*. In Pindar, the *aulos* is invented in an act of divine mimesis of monsters' sounds. Pindar's Athena thus resembles an 'epinician composer': she imitates the encounter between a hero and a monster through instrumental sound, and auletic performance is predicated on this very notion of using the mimetic capacity of the *aulos* to translate contests into sound.<sup>638</sup>

Indeed, in addition to the *aulos*' origin in a particular act of mythical mimesis, the instrument is regarded for its wide-ranging mimetic capabilities. Its profound power to conjure without words the incredible range of events in Apollo's slaying of the dragon demonstrates not only the instrument's own mimetic qualities, but also that the *style* of playing was enormously expressive and capacious.<sup>639</sup> This style itself was not limited to *auletes* alone, but shared by a range

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<sup>636</sup> See also *Sch. Pind. Nem.* 2.1. See D'Angour (1997) 338 and West (1992) 212-214. On Apollo and serpents, see Graf (2009) 30-32.

<sup>637</sup> See Gurd (2016) 99.

<sup>638</sup> Martin (2003) 163. On the conceptual oppositions between Pindar and Timotheus, see Csapo and Wilson (2009) 281-282.

<sup>639</sup> Martin (2003); Power (2010) 312.

of musicians (including *kitharodes*) who composed what is referred to today as ‘New Music.’<sup>640</sup> We will remain with *auletes* for now, and turn to other New Musicians shortly.

According to many critics of the *aulos*, the mimetic power of the reed instrument had a forceful impact, both on the person playing the *aulos* and on its audience.<sup>641</sup> Aristotle (*Pol.* 1341a18-28) writes that the playing of the *aulos* impedes the *logos* of the player, because its placement in the mouth blocks the flow of language.<sup>642</sup> Just as the *aulos* replaces the possibility for verbal melody with expressive sound, we may consider also how the monstrosity associated with the pipes replaces the human breath with a monstrous surrogate. It seems that the ‘voice’ is not the only aspect of the *aulos* player that becomes monstrous: according to Plutarch, Alcibiades consequently expressed disdain for the instrument, and also objected to its ugly distortion of the player’s face.<sup>643</sup> Alcibiades’ complaint engages with the myth wherein Athena, after inventing the *aulos*, discarded it when she saw how playing the instrument distorted her features. The *aulos*, therefore, can change the beautiful, logocentric singing voice into a strange and sensational sound; and it can also change the beauty of the face into something uglier and more grotesque.

The *aulos* has the power to affect not only the player, but also its audience. For Plato and Aristotle, auletic performance was potentially disruptive to democratic norms. The Greeks were widely familiar with the idea that music in general can assume power over its listeners, and the *aulos* tapped into a socially transgressive power. As Martin West writes,

[The Greeks] had definite theories... about the various moral and emotional effects of different musical modes and rhythms. There are stories of music being employed

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<sup>640</sup> On the connection between the lyre’s developments and the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, see Gurd (2016) 99-102. On New Music and mimesis, see LeVen (2014) 189-243. On the term ‘New Music’, see Csapo (2000) 401 and (2004) 208, D’Angour (2011), and Csapo and Wilson (2009) 278.

<sup>641</sup> Martin (2003) 156.

<sup>642</sup> See also Plat. *Rep.* 399d. See Csapo (2004) 217-218 on the implications of this disfigurement of the aulete’s body. See also D’Angour (2006) 282 and Wilson (1999) 58.

<sup>643</sup> Plut. *Alc.* 2.5-6.

deliberately to manipulate people's moods.<sup>644</sup>

The disdain that Plato and Aristotle exhibit towards the social implications of the *aulos*, and also towards the stylistic developments of New Music generally, has been thoroughly discussed by a number of scholars.<sup>645</sup> In modern scholarship, partly due to the influence of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy: Out of the Spirit of Music*, the *aulos* is regularly situated on a binary with the lyre, and so the negative criticism of the instrument is understood through that particular lens.<sup>646</sup> A second meaningful binary to consider alongside the *aulos*-lyre grouping is that of traditional musical style as opposed to the New Musical style.<sup>647</sup>

This new style included a number of developments that were often framed as acts of violence against music itself. A particularly vivid example of this is Pherecrates' *Cheiron*, a piece which is itself titled after a benevolent monster. Through Pherecrates, Music personified complains of the assaults that Phrynus and Timotheus – both kitharodes – have inflicted upon her:

Φρῦνις δ' ἴδιον στρόβιλον ἐμβαλὼν τινα  
κάμπτων με καὶ στρέφων ὄλην διέφθορον,  
ἐν πέντε χορδαῖς δῶδεχ' ἀρμονίας ἔχων.  
ἀλλ' οὖν ἔμοιγε χούτος ἦν ἀποχρῶν ἀνήρ·  
εἰ γάρ τι κάξήμαρτεν, αὐτίς ἀνέλαβεν. ὁ δὲ Τιμόθεος . . . (Pherecrates fr. 155.14-18)

Increased polymetricism, use of *melisma*, augmentation of instruments, use of linguistic compounds,<sup>648</sup> exploitation of the phonic impressions of language,<sup>649</sup> and emphasis on instrumental sound and virtuosity all distressed aristocratic Athenian critics of the New Music.<sup>650</sup>

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<sup>644</sup> West (1992) 31.

<sup>645</sup> Wilson (1999), (2003), (2004), Martin (2003); LeVen (2010); Power (2010) 82-89.

<sup>646</sup> D'Angour (2006); Wilson (1999), (2003), and (2004).

<sup>647</sup> Martin (2003) 153-154; cf. Wilson (2004) 273-275.

<sup>648</sup> See LeVen (2014) 160-161 for discussion of compounds and periphrasis in the language of New Music.

<sup>649</sup> Csapo (2004) 222-225.

<sup>650</sup> On the New Musical developments as 'monstrous', see Ellingham (1921) 63-64. See also Wilson (2004).

The virtuosic developments of the New Music were particularly troubling to its critics, due to the fact that they dethroned the voice as the primary or driving instrument in performances.

Experimentation in mimetic, expressive sound changed the dominant dynamics of song itself. Before the innovations of the New Music, words determined musical rhythm (and potentially, melody),<sup>651</sup> and so language drove the soundscape. New Musicians developed rhythms that were partially independent of the words themselves, because musical rhythm no longer had to be determined by the rhythm of language. The displacement of logocentric sense by sonic expressivity was disturbing to some critics and enthralling to audiences.<sup>652</sup> This anxiety in response to the development of instrumental soundscapes in turn reveals the power that sound itself was considered to have over society. As Armand D'Angour notes, these musical developments can be understood as 'both a social and a technical phenomenon':<sup>653</sup> stylistic innovation had important consequences within both musical and societal contexts.

Although very few lines of poetry from the New Musicians survive, we do know that monsters appeared as a recurring theme in the New Music. We also know that the instrumental sounds generated by the New Musicians often took on what were perceived as animalistic qualities – a soundscape that troubled Plato.<sup>654</sup> Timotheus composed two (lost) poems dedicated to the monsters Scylla (*PMG* 793-794) and the Cyclops (*PMG* 780),<sup>655</sup> so it is clear that the New Musicians explored the poetic expression of monstrous voices with both the *aulos* and the

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<sup>651</sup> D'Angour (2006).

<sup>652</sup> Pl. *Leg.* 3.700a-701b. See Budelmann and LeVen (2014) 192 and Csapo (2004) 207 on the senselessness associated with dithyramb. See also LeVen (2014) 150-188 on critiques of the language of the New Music. On performance culture, see Csapo (2004), D'Angour (2006), and Wilson (2004) 303-306. On the popularity of Timotheus, see Csapo and Wilson (2009) 279 and 287-290 and LeVen (2011).

<sup>653</sup> D'Angour (2011) 202.

<sup>654</sup> Pl. *Leg.* 669e-670a. West (1992) 105.

<sup>655</sup> See Power (2013) 245.

*kithara*.<sup>656</sup> Timotheus' reputation for sonic mimesis, paired with criticism and parody from Aristotle and Philoxenus respectively, make it certain that these works would have attempted to convey monstrous sound directly to the audience. The New Music brings to the ear what so many of the poems examined in this thesis have conveyed only through narrative mediation.

Throughout the previous chapters, we have seen monstrous voice mediated through narratorial devices such as the gifts of the Muses (Hesiod), the voice of the hero (Homer), descriptions of sounds (Hesiod and Pindar), and Messenger speech (Euripides). The voices of monsters rarely resound without mediation in Greek poetry, but exceptions to this include performances of Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* and Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. In the *Geryoneis*, there is no indication that the sonic characteristics of the monster's voice are qualitatively different from the poem's other voices or narration; so although Stesichorus uses the medium of voice and expression to ask new questions about monstrosity, the actual sonority of Geryon's voice is not, as far as we can ascertain from the extant fragments, 'monstrous.' Meanwhile, the *Oresteia* stages the Erinyes' transformation into Eumenides, and the changes in their voices are a fundamental reflection of that transition. The Erinyes' soundscape begins in the minds of the Chorus of Elders, accompanied by the sound of the *aulos*; once onstage, the Erinyes whimper and snore in their sleep, later sing curses, and eventually exclaim the victory shout. Although the Erinyes' voices are heavily linguistic throughout the *Eumenides*, Aeschylus introduces the directly performed sound of monstrosity in terms of language and soundscape.<sup>657</sup>

Thus through the genres and poems considered in the previous chapters, there emerges a movement toward staging the actual sonic character of the monstrous voice. This movement

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<sup>656</sup> Other compositions of Timotheus' that overlaps with the material examined in this thesis is his dithyramb 'The Madness of Ajax' and 'Elpenor.' For the former, see Hordern (2002) 99-100 and Bélis (1998). For the latter, see Hordern (2002) 104-106.

<sup>657</sup> See Chapter 4.

reaches its denouement in New Music, where the extralinguistic roars, bellows, and barks of the monsters would have been expressed through the interplay between instrumental and sung sound effects. What we know of Timotheus' *Scylla* and *Cyclops* is small, but the existence of these two poems demonstrate that Timotheus explored the mimesis of both linguistic and extra-linguistic monstrous voice. Aristotle indicates that the monster Scylla was depicted by the aulete 'with an extraordinary degree of histrionic physicality':<sup>658</sup> the *aulos*-playing monster would physically drag the chorus leader around the stage (*Poet.* 1461b30-32). This auletic depiction of Scylla, who is nonverbal in Homer, fits into Timotheus' pattern of imitating extra-linguistic sonic moments, such as the *Birth Pangs of Semele* and the storm in *Persians*.

Aristotle describes Timotheus' unseemly and inappropriate depiction of the voice of Odysseus in the *Scylla*: ἔστιν δὲ παράδειγμα . . . τοῦ δὲ ἀπρεποῦς καὶ μὴ ἀρμόττοντος ὃ τε θρῆνος Ὀδυσσέως ἐν τῇ Σκύλλῃ . . . (Aristot. *Poet.* 15.1454a28). But even from his brief complaint, a similarity emerges between Homer's and Timotheus' depictions of Scylla. Homer's Scylla reduced Odysseus' men into fish and reduced Odysseus himself into a helpless, silent hero whose *mētis* fails; similarly, Timotheus' Scylla transforms Odysseus from a clever speaker into an inappropriate and effeminate mourner. Although we do not know what precisely the voice of Scylla itself would have sounded like, we know that she has a similar effect, which is to trouble the identity and even the vocal capabilities of those who cross her path.

Our knowledge of Timotheus' *Cyclops* consists of five lines of the poem, which are preserved by Athenaeus:

ἔγχευε δ' ἐν μὲν δέπας κίσσινον μελαίνας  
σταγόνοσ ἀμβρότας ἀφρῶ βρυάζον,  
εἴκοσιν δὲ μέτρ' ἐνέχευ', ἀνέμισγε

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<sup>658</sup> Power (2010) 142-143.

δ' αἶμα Βακχίου νεορρύτοισιν  
δακρύοισι Νυμφῶν.

(Timoth. *PMG* 780)

In addition to these five lines of poetry,<sup>659</sup> we also know from Philoxenus' parody of the *Cyclops* (*PMG* 815-827) that the monster was depicted by Timotheus himself, singing to the *kithara* – possibly provoking a conceptual dissonance between the disorderly monster and the Apollonian *kithara*.<sup>660</sup> The *aulos* then is not the only instrument that can be exploited for the purposes of monstrous soundscapes in New Music – though perhaps it is fitting that the more humanoid vocalist of the pair, Polyphemus, is associated with the *kithara*, and that the voice of the bestial and feminine monster Scylla is rendered by the *aulos*.

The *Cyclops*, it appears, was a popular figure for the New Musicians, and there is one *Cyclops* we do have in its entirety: the *Cyclops* of Euripides.<sup>661</sup> Satyr plays in general are of great interest for the topic of monstrous voice. Although the *Cyclops* is the only satyr play that survives in complete form, we do know that these plays regularly feature monstrous choruses composed of satyrs and other monstrous characters, such as the Sphinx and the Phorcydes in Aeschylus' satyr plays.<sup>662</sup> This regular onstage presence of the monstrous chorus indicates that, unlike tragedy, the voice of the monster resounds directly in every single satyr play.<sup>663</sup> In Euripides' *Cyclops*, the

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<sup>659</sup> See Budelmann and LeVen (2014) 203-204 on the extant lines of Timotheus' *Cyclops* and the poetics of 'blending.' See also LeVen (2014) 176-177 on the Homeric presence in these lines.

<sup>660</sup> Power (2010) 142-143 and 550 takes Philoxenus' as a parody of, and therefore a window into, Timotheus' *Cyclops*; Power expands this argument in Power (2013) 250-252. See also Power (2013) 237-238 on Philoxenus' *Cyclops* and Aristophanes' parody of it in *Wealth*, and 254 on Polyphemus' *kithara* as a 'silent prop' in Philoxenus' version of *Cyclops*. Csapo (2004) 215, in discussion of Philoxenus' *Cyclops*, does not make the same assumption. See also Hordern (2002) 106-107 for bibliography on the Polyphemus myth in and beyond dithyramb; and Graf (2009) 33-51 on Apollo's musical associations.

<sup>661</sup> On Euripidean music generally and Euripides' status as New Musician, see Csapo (2000).

<sup>662</sup> See Seaford (1984) 21-26 for discussion of the known combinations of tragedy and satyr-play. See also Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 189-196 on *Sphinx*.

<sup>663</sup> On satyrs generally, see Seaford (1984) 5-10.

monstrous voice dominates the soundscape: the only human character is Odysseus, and all of the other characters are monsters (satyrs, Silenus, and Polyphemus).<sup>664</sup>

The satyr is, of course, a figure associated with the *aulos*, particularly through the myth of Marsyas.<sup>665</sup> Marsyas takes up the *aulos* when Athena throws the instrument away due to its disfiguring properties.<sup>666</sup> The satyr, a figure known for its physical abnormality, does not seem to find issue with its disfiguring properties; something in the satyr potentially also connects with the Gorgonic voice that lies at the heart of the *aulos*' sounds, in Pindar's mythic account.<sup>667</sup> The *aulos* myths, considered as a group, therefore show a complex trajectory for monstrous sound. The *aulos* is taken from the mouth of mourning feminine monsters, transformed into an instrument by Athena, then rejected by her; it is later assumed by masculine monsters, who often make music with the *aulos* in scenes of revelry or jubilation.

Patrick O'Sullivan and Christopher Collard's 2013 edition of Euripides' *Cyclops* has re-kindled serious interest in the satyr play, which is historically overlooked in broader studies of Euripides' corpus or of Athenian drama generally.<sup>668</sup> But classicists interested in monsters will find particular interest in this genre, which – like the satyr itself – is regularly characterised as a hybrid.<sup>669</sup> Both the reception history of satyr play, and the study of Euripides' *Cyclops* itself undoubtedly shed light on the way that the characterisation of the monster changes according to genre.

Euripides' *Cyclops* reveals that one single author could render the monster in a highly prismatic light across genres, and this perhaps indicates that the idea of the 'monster' is not a fixed

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<sup>664</sup> On the relationship between the nonhuman choruses of Old Comedy and satyr play, see Griffith (2015) 16 n. 6.

<sup>665</sup> Leclercq-Neveu (1989); Wilson (1999) 60-75; Wilson (2004) 274-277.

<sup>666</sup> Csapo (2004) 217-218.

<sup>667</sup> See Seaford (1984) 36 on satyrs' responses to musical and instrumental innovation within satyr plays.

<sup>668</sup> Griffith (2015) 1-7 also discusses the state of scholarly interest in the genre of satyr play.

<sup>669</sup> O'Sullivan and Collard (2013) 8-22; Seaford (1984) 5-10.

or stable concept even to one individual tragedian. The violent and horrifying action of the sea-bull in Euripides' tragedy *Hippolytus* takes place offstage, and is relayed to the characters in the play and the audience through the Messenger speech. Satyr play, on the other hand, allows for an unmediated and more playful access to the monster's voice.<sup>670</sup>

Euripides' *Cyclops* stages the encounter between Odysseus and Polyphemus, but introduces (or perhaps exaggerates) the presence of Dionysus in the encounter. The satyrs mediate the encounter between Odysseus and the Cyclops. Where in the *Odyssey* the presence of Dionysus is invoked only by the use of wine to blur the Cyclops' mind, Euripides' *Cyclops* exploits these Dionysian elements to create an interface between the hero and the monster. Polyphemus is mistaken when he announces the absence of Dionysus (οὐχὶ Διόνυσος τάδε, | οὐ κρόταλα χαλκοῦ τυμπάνων τ' ἀράγματα *Cyc.* 204-205). The entire play, in a sense, deals with locating Dionysus in the encounter between monster and hero.<sup>671</sup>

Euripides also depicts a multifaceted understanding of monstrosity and a network of relations between monsters. Indeed, his *Cyclops* gives the most developed dynamism between monsters that we have seen since Hesiod's *Theogony*. There is no sense of community between Polyphemus and the satyrs by virtue of their mutual monstrosity – on the contrary, the satyrs are captives of Polyphemus.<sup>672</sup> This is unsurprising, because Polyphemus is marked as an outsider even from his own monstrous community of Cyclopes. The only reason Polyphemus does not eat them the way he eats Odysseus' men is that the satyrs are indigestible – or more specifically, his

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<sup>670</sup> Seaford (1984) 1-5 and 10-16 on satyr play as 'playful tragedy.'

<sup>671</sup> See Hunter (2009) 65 on wine and 53-77 on the relationship between Euripides' *Cyclops* and Homer's *Odyssey*. On this, see also Katsouris (1997), Seaford (1984) 51-59 and Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 431-434.

<sup>672</sup> See Seaford (1984) 33-34 on captivity of the satyrs as a likely theme in satyr play.

stomach could not handle the disturbance of their dancing feet (*Cyc.* 220-221). While men can be reduced to food for monsters, these monsters cannot.

Polyphemus' voice exhibits a wide range of sonic qualities throughout the play. He speaks, he sings cacophonously, and he threatens to bang his clothing so loudly that the sounds would rival the thunder of Zeus. The violence of Polyphemus is matched by the comic dissonance in his voice. The satyrs use their voices in a markedly different way: their voices are how they participate in the action of the play when they prefer not to get involved physically.<sup>673</sup> When Odysseus calls the chorus *πονηροί* in his plan to blind Polyphemus, the satyrs say that they would not like to physically participate, but can lend the help of an Orphic incantation they know:

ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἐπωιδὴν Ὀρφέως ἀγαθὴν πάνυ,  
ὥστ' αὐτόματον τὸν δαλὸν ἐς τὸ κρανίον  
στείχονθ' ὑφάπτειν τὸν μονῶπα παῖδα γῆς. (*Cyc.* 646-648)

Odysseus replies,

χειρὶ δ' εἰ μηδὲν σθένεις,  
ἀλλ' οὖν ἐπεγκέλευέ γ', ὡς εὐψυχίαν  
φίλων κελευσμοῖς τοῖσι σοῖς κτησώμεθα. (*Cyc.* 651-653)

The satyrs then begin a song where they encourage and will Odysseus' deeds of violence against the Cyclops, in turn using their voices to participate in the violence against Polyphemus (*Cyc.* 654-662). The satyrs claim the agential power of their own voices, and they thus use their voices to participate in the action of the play.<sup>674</sup>

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This meandering survey of Timotheus and Euripides brought us through dithyramb, *nomos*, satyr play, and tragedy. We have seen how the instrument of the *aulos* is conceptualised as the monstrous

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<sup>673</sup> For a discussion of satyrs' ability to escape dramatic conflict without suffering personal harm, see Griffith (2015) 18-19 and Seaford (1984) ad 652-653.

<sup>674</sup> The theory of agential sound which I propose is informed partly by Gell (1998), on the view that art and nonhuman entities can possess social agency.

voice, mediated by divinity into instrumental form, and then assumed by human and monstrous musicians alike. We have seen how both the *aulos* and stringed instruments can participate in conjuring monstrous soundscapes in New Musical performance. We have considered the shifting portrayal of monstrous voices, which move from highly mediated representation into sensational sonic imitation from the eighth to the fourth centuries.

We have also traced several echoes of monstrosity that percolate through figures that are not monsters. We have seen how the monstrous voice is regularly linked to the gods – either in competition with the gods, mediated by the gods, or domesticated by the gods.<sup>675</sup> We have seen how figures that are not in themselves monsters engage in serious affinity with monsters. Athena, and Dionysus have haunted these chapters: indeed, they stand outside of monstrosity while often manifesting its powers and its problems. Athena wears the Gorgon’s visage on her armour and gives its voice to her city. Dionysus provokes processes of becoming other – both monstrous and ecstatic – through wine, madness, and tragedy itself, and he circulates in monstrous avatars shaped like bulls and satyrs. So although Greek poetry often places monsters in faraway places or in messenger speeches, the monster finds several homes in Greek poetry. The monster resides in madness; the monster is situated adjacently to the gods; the monster lives within the *polis*; the monster inhabits the power of music; the monster is located in the voice.

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<sup>675</sup> On this pattern in ‘archaic Greek sound culture’, see Gurd (2016) 98-99.

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